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The theme of isolation in four novels of Daniel Defoe

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THE THEME OF ISOLATION IN FOUR NOVELS OF DANIEL DEFOE

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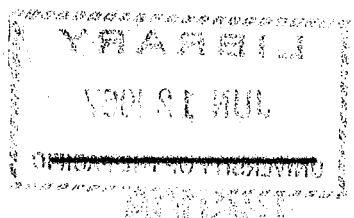

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. THE PURPOSE

Daniel Defoe, separated from the society of the majority of English people of his time by his religion and his low social status, was concerned with isolation in the lives of the characters in his novels. The solitude of Robinson Crusoe has been frequently discussed, but the characters in other novels have not been studied in much detail nor have the characters been studied as a group of isolates with similar characteristics.

The purpose of the following study is to determine what characteristics Defoe's isolates have in common, what attitude Defoe had toward solitude and the isolates, and what effect Defoe's personal seclusion had on his fiction as represented by the four novels Robinson Crusoe, Moll Flanders, Captain Singleton, and Roxana.

The isolates selected for study are two men: Robinson Crusoe and Captain Singleton, and two women: Moll Flanders and Roxana. All of these characters are at some time separated from the society acceptable to the majority of citizens by place of residence, by religious belief, by social status, by economic conditions, and by psychological factors. The chapter following will be devoted to the

study of the causes and effects of isolation.

The term "isolate" will be used in its broadest sense to mean one who is alone. It will include one who is secluded or retired from the world, one who seeks solitude because he chooses to be alone, as well as one who is forced to remain apart because of circumstances beyond his control.

II. THE THEME OF ISOLATION IN LITERARY HISTORY

The theme of the outcast, isolate, or wanderer has been found in literature from the beginning of man when Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden and were forced to wander. Their son Cain was the first to be rejected by human society because of his crime. Many of the elements of the wanderer myth are found in early Biblical history.

One of the most famous stories of classical Greece is of the wanderer Ulysses in The Odyssey. The storms, islands, and shipwrecks which figure so prominently in Homer's writings are also important devices in Defoe.

Jesus Christ is often mentioned as a wanderer upon the earth. He was reviled for kindness to the rejected people of society--prostitutes, tax collectors, and lepers. The reception into Heaven at the end of the long journey is the ultimate hope of all wanderers, symbolized by Christ.

Much medieval writing has to do with religious wanderers on the Crusades or on personal searches for the Holy Grail. "The Wanderer" is the title of one of the earliest extant poems in Anglo-Saxon literature. The writers of medieval times also used the wandering rogue as a character in their writings. In the fables, animals were given the characteristics of the rogues.

The wanderer in the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was often the rogue of the picaresque tale. The picaresque rogues are one of the sources for Defoe's characters, although Defoe developed his characters more completely and provided more plot than a true work in the picaresque style had.

The criminal biographies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries telling the lives of real criminals were also models for Defoe. The criminals were often called rogues, but they were not the same as the picaresque rogues. The picaresque rogue was basically a light-hearted fellow who enjoyed adventures just for the thrill and usually stopped short of criminal acts. The criminal rogue was serious about his crimes and wandered because he was forced to in order to escape the officers of the law. Elements of both the picaresque and criminal rogues are found in Defoe's novels.

A third major influence on the novels under

discussion is Utopian literature, which presents plans for ideal commonwealths. The usual pattern for this type is to have a solitary person transported to an imaginary island. Both Robinson Crusoe and Captain Singleton were marooned on islands, and Captain Singleton crossed the largely unexplored continent of Africa which Defoe described as well as he could, using the limited knowledge of his day.

III. ISOLATION IN THE LIFE OF DEFOE

The greatest influence on the isolation theme found in the novels was Defoe's own feeling of isolation.

Daniel was born into the family of James Foe (probably in 1660)--a family of Dissenters in the parish of Cripplegate, London. The exact Dissenting denomination is disputed by biographers, but it is certain that the church was Calvinistic in theology. In 1662 an Act of Uniformity drove all Dissenting ministers from the Anglican pulpits into meeting-houses; in 1664 "a Conventicle Act was passed which prohibited more than five persons meeting together to take part in any form of public worship other than that provided for in the Prayer Book."[1] The intention was to force the Dissenters back into the Anglican Church. The effect was, however, that the Dissenters held secret

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[1] James Sutherland, Defoe (London: Methuen and Company, 1950), p. 10.

meetings and were more religious than ever. James Sutherland states:

> It is important to realize the situation in which the Dissenters were placed, for it was in this situation that Defoe spent his boyhood; and when one is apt to be impatient with the Dissenter for his fanaticism, his too serious view of life, his suspicion of innocent pleasures, his harshness of thought and expression, his lack of the natural graces, one must remember the unnatural circumstances in which he found himself. The fires of religious zeal, banked up by unnecessarily harsh restrictions, only smouldered the more fiercely underneath. Persecution, though it may bring out some of the noblest traits in a character, is apt to warp it at the same time; and it is useless to expect a merry England when one-fifth of the population is being bullied by the other--and no doubt merrier--four-fifths.[2]

The Dissenters could not bully the Anglicans, but they fought back in words. They blamed the Great Plague of 1665 and the London Fire of 1666 on the wickedness of the Anglicans. God had sent His judgment upon the land as He had at Sodom and Gomorrah.

Possibly this immediate warning to the people of England inspired the Foe family to greater dedication. James Foe decided that Daniel should be a minister and, when he was of school age, sent him to the Newington Green Academy run by the Dissenting minister Reverend Charles Morton. The emphasis in the school was on English in contrast to the usual Latin and Greek of the Anglican

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[2] Ibid., p. 11.

academies. His contemporaries looked down on Defoe as not being educated as a gentleman, although by modern standards he was given a better education in science, mathematics, and English than the students in the Anglican academies received. Defoe was very sensitive about the reputation of his school in the social world. The school was not inferior in education, but it was inferior in social status. The problem of the segregated school was that there was little opportunity to meet anyone not of the Dissenting belief. However, there were some students in the school who were not Dissenters:

> Among those were the sons of knights and baronets, who had been sent there by their parents to keep them away from the temptations of Oxford or Cambridge. Defoe's fellow students, then, were not all the sons of tradesmen, nor all theological students, though no doubt these were in the majority....The handicap remained; and the handicap was not being born into the middle class, but being born a Dissenter.... Defoe, whose strange and adventurous career frequently took him into high and privileged places, remained something of an outsider all his life....Of the other literary men of his generation he seems to have known almost none, and the few that he did know were almost all Dissenters. It is a sad pity; but in that age of bitter religious dissension and public bad temper it was almost inevitable.[3]

After he finished his schooling, he went to work as a wholesaler in haberdashery in London. He also imported goods and apparently made several business trips to the Continent.

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[3] Ibid., pp. 24-25.

On January 1, 1684, soon after he established his haberdashery business, he married Mary Tuffley, the daughter of a merchant who was a Dissenter. She brought him a dowry of £3,700. The marriage was not a happy one, and Defoe spent little time at home. (Richard Savage suggested that Benjamin Norton Defoe, a young journalist in London, was the illegitimate son of Daniel Defoe and his mistress, an oyster wench, but the truth of the statement has never been established.[4]) Eight children were born to Daniel and Mary Defoe--six of whom lived to maturity.

The first of his illegal actions seems to have taken place in 1685 when he rode with the Duke of Monmouth in his rebellion against James II. No details are known of Defoe's part in this campaign.

From 1688 when William of Orange became King until 1692, Defoe did very well in business and was supposedly a respected businessman. But Sutherland states:

> The very high estimate of Defoe's character which was formed by his early biographers can hardly survive some of the facts that have recently come to light. Between the years 1688 and 1694 he was sued on not less than eight different occasions by disappointed and angry people who claimed that he had defrauded them in one way or another. When a man is defending half a dozen lawsuits almost at the same time, he may, of course, be entirely innocent in every single case;

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[4]For a discussion of this see Sutherland, pp. 56-59.

> he may be, but the odds are that he is not, and the likelihood is that he has not been overscrupulous in some of his dealings.[5]

In 1692 he was in deep financial trouble. He even defrauded his mother-in-law of £400 by selling her some civet cats that belonged to one of his creditors. The war with France completed the ruin of his trade, and Defoe went bankrupt owing about £17,000. He went into hiding somewhere (probably Bristol) in order to escape his creditors until he could come to terms with them. He eventually paid back much of the debt, but he was never again respected by anyone in the business community and was regarded as a speculator or schemer.

The officials of his church also disapproved of bankruptcy. Frank Hewitt writes of the Calvinist church:

> Financial success was an outward sign of inward piety. Conversely, bankruptcy indicated some inward falling from favor with God....Dr. Doddridge had three members expelled from his Congregational Church for falling "in the world."[6]

There is no record of what happened officially to Defoe in his church, but because he was in hiding the congregation may not have been forced into action. Hewitt continues:

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[5] Ibid., p. 35.

[6] Frank Spencer Hewitt, "Daniel Defoe: Dissenter" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Cornell University, 1947), p. 13.

> He was an outcast with wrecked hopes. There must have been people among the Dissenters who sympathized with him in his misfortunes, yet it is certain that those men whom he had lampooned in The New Discovery gloated over his disasters.[7]

Defoe's actions are not documented for several years. He traveled for the Whig government and began to write pamphlets. He was useful to the government--which at this time was tolerant of Dissenters. It was about this time that Daniel changed his last name from Foe to what he considered to be the more aristocratic Defoe (or DeFoe--both spellings were used).

In 1702 Queen Anne, a hater of Dissenters, came to the throne, and Defoe was again a social outcast. Sutherland explains the Anglican's hatred of Dissenters as follows:

> The hatred of the Dissenters in England had its roots in something fundamental in the English character. To be a Dissenter was to call attention to religion--a thing that the average Englishman is generally glad to avoid. And by the mere act of dissent the nonconformist was passing a tacit criticism on those who conformed....the Dissenters were mostly to be found in the trading class into which Defoe had been born. To go to a meeting-house or a chapel came to be regarded as a sign of social inferiority. The gentleman supported, or at any rate countenanced, the Church of England; it was the lower middle classes, he felt, who whined and canted and grew fanatical over their religion.[8]

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[7] Ibid., pp. 104-105.

[8] Sutherland, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

The extreme position of the Queen against Dissenters led Defoe to write and publish anonymously The Shortest Way With Dissenters, a satire which both Anglicans and Dissenters misinterpreted and failed to see as a joke. Defoe was discovered to be the author, and a warrant for his arrest was issued on January 3, 1703. He fled and hid in the house of a French weaver. In April 1703, he wrote to William Paterson, one of the founders of the Bank of England, begging him to persuade Robert Harley to help him. Defoe reflects on his situation as follows:

> Tis Vain for me To Complain of the Misfortune of my Present Condition, Since you Can Render me No Services for which you Shall not Receive [sic] Reproaches from all Partyes. Nay Even the Dissenters Like Casha to Caesar Lift up the first Dagger at me: I Confess it makes me Reflect on the wholl body of the Dissenters with Something of Contempt More Than Usuall, and gives me the More Regrett That I Suffer for Such a People.[9]

On May 20 he was betrayed by an informer for £50. He was imprisoned in Newgate and tried in July; he stood in the pillory on July 29. Robert Harley used his influence to have him released from prison in November. The reason for the release at that time is not known, but the circumstances were unusual.

For the next few years Defoe worked both openly and secretly for Harley, the Secretary of State. He wrote

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[9]Daniel Defoe, The Letters of Daniel Defoe, ed. George Harris Healey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 4.

government pamphlets giving the government point of view and also traveled around England and Scotland on secret missions. He also accepted other secret commissions to write pamphlets giving the opposite view of the ones he wrote for the government. Because of his secrecy, it is difficult to establish the canon of his writings. He wrote anonymously and pseudonymously for several papers including his own Review (which he wrote for seven years). He worked for Nathaniel Mist who was imprisoned in 1719 and again in 1720 for writing offensive material.

In 1719 Defoe wrote Robinson Crusoe, the first of his novels. For five years he continued to write novels. Then he lived in moderate retirement until 1730 when he disappeared into hiding from another creditor. He died of "a lethargy" on April 26, 1731, at a lodging house in Ropemaker's Alley and was buried in the Dissenters' Bunhill Fields Cemetery. Brian Fitzgerald comments upon Defoe's death as follows:

> He was completely alone. His death passed almost unnoticed. The grave-digger in Bunhill Fields could not even spell his name correctly--"Mr Dubow" was what he wrote. But in the parish register, he was recorded as "Daniel de Foe, gentleman."[10]

He thus escaped from his last creditor and saved his small property for his family.

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[10]Brian Fitzgerald, Daniel Defoe (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1955), p. 239.

IV. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In his day Daniel Defoe was not considered to be a person of any literary standing. He had a limited popular reputation as a journalist, but his novels were considered to be fit for the lower-class people only.

The first publication about Defoe was in 1786 when George Chalmers wrote a "Life of Defoe" for inclusion in John Stockdale's edition of Defoe's The History of the Union. Charles Eaton Burch states:

> Chalmer's life, then, may be regarded as the first attempt to place Defoe before the world as a writer of rare distinction and as an Englishman who deserved the esteem of his century.[11]

Sir Walter Scott took an interest in Defoe and is alleged to have written the section on the life of Defoe in James Ballantyne's edition of the novels in 1810. Scott did write a long critical essay--the first criticism of a literary nature of Defoe's works. This edition is also important because it listed about a hundred works of Defoe.

The first important biography of Defoe was Walter Wilson's Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel Defoe in 1830. However, several important legal documents were not available to him, and the facts of Defoe's career as a spy

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[11]Charles Eaton Burch, "The English Reputation of Daniel Defoe" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University, 1933), p. 30.

were not known. Burch points out that the chief defect is that "Wilson began with the thesis that Defoe was one of the most noble characters of his generation, and accordingly set about to prove his case."[12] A typical comment by Wilson is the following:

> In the story of "Roxana," there are incidents, indeed, that cannot be welcome to a virtuous mind; but the fault is in the subject rather than in the author, whose aim is to describe human nature as it is, for the purpose of contrasting it with what it should be.[13]

The Victorians objected to Defoe's writings because of the lack of moral standards. Moll Flanders and Roxana were not considered suitable for decent people to read. There is almost no criticism of the novels themselves. The few discussions are of moral attitudes. William Hazlitt wrote in the introduction to his edition of The Works of Daniel De Foe in 1840: "A main object of De Foe in all of his writings, is to bring forward some prominent error that has taken root in society, for the purpose of its correction."[14] His comment is typical of the Victorian emphasis upon

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[12] Ibid., p. 47.

[13] Walter Wilson, Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel Defoe (London: Hurst, Chance, and Company, 1830), III, 524.

[14] William Hazlitt, "The Life of Daniel De Foe," The Works of Daniel De Foe, ed. William Hazlitt (London: John Clements, 1840), I, cxvi.

morality. Defoe's writing was apologized for by his biographers. William Lee says of Defoe:

> His personal honesty and integrity, the purity of his life, nay even his high religious character, has never been called in question by any well-informed writer, and is attested by the excellence of his numerous moral works; composed, not only previously, but interposed between, and continued after, the publication of those which are felt to be offensive to modern notions of delicacy.[15]

But he called the novel Moll Flanders "the flowing of a polluted stream."[16]

A rather derogatory biography was written by William Minto. He did not care for either Defoe or his works; he writes:

> No doubt Defoe's chief claim to the world's interest is that he is the author of Robinson Crusoe. But there is little to be said about this or any other of Defoe's tales in themselves. Their art is simple, unique, incommunicable, and they are too well known to need description.[17]

The critics agreed with him for the next fifty years--until about the 1930's.

The great concern of the late Victorian period and early twentieth century seemed to be determining the location of Crusoe's island. The book itself was seldom considered.

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[15] William Lee, Daniel Defoe: His Life, and Recently Discovered Writings: Extending from 1716 to 1729 (London: John Camden Hotten, 1869), I, 339.

[16] Ibid., p. 356.

[17] William Minto, Daniel Defoe, ed. John Morley (New York: Harper and Brothers, [188_?]), p. 130.

Mrs. M. O. W. Oliphant summed up the attitude of the 1890's toward Defoe: "He is remembered by a boy's book, which is indeed the first of boy's books, yet not much more."[18]

With the discovery of Defoe's illegal government activities, his reputation as a moral novelist was destroyed. It was commonly thought that a bad man could not possibly write uplifting books. William P. Trent wrote in 1916 of Moll Flanders:

> The full title is unquotable, and many of the incidents in the life of the prostitute and transported felon are so coarse and repulsive that the book has been shunned and its author denounced by many sensitive readers....It is not a book to be recommended to young readers--perhaps it is not a book to be recommended to any one.[19]

The critic George Saintsbury in the same year gave Defoe's reputation the heavy blow:

> If you read Defoe for anything else but the story you would hang yourself. His style, though not without vigour, is without much attraction; his characters, though they have life have little individuality, and no depth, or colour, or charm; his descriptions and inventories, though they add to that strange verisimilitude which has been so much discussed in him, have rarely any other merit; plot he has next to none; and his dialogue, though once more deserving the praise accorded to his description, deserves no other, for it has none

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[18] Mrs. M. O. W. Oliphant, Historical Characters of the Reign of Queen Anne (New York: Century Company, 1894), p. 130.

[19] William P. Trent, Daniel Defoe: How to Know Him (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1916), pp. 214-15.

> of the various gifts of humor, irony, quaintness, passion, and rest which give zest to book-talk.[20]

There was nothing of importance written on Defoe from 1916 until 1924 when Arthur W. Secord wrote Studies in the Narrative Method of Defoe,[21] which is an excellent study of Defoe and the first objective study of the works. It is the first work about Defoe which can be used for a critical study in depth for other than historical interest.

E. M. Forster in 1927 devoted twelve pages of Aspects of the Novel to Moll Flanders. He was sympathetic to Moll in contrast to the Victorian condemners. He wrote about Moll:

> In the later part of her career she turns from husbands to thieving; she thinks this is a change for the worse and a natural darkness spreads over the scene. But she is as firm and amusing as ever. How just are her reflections when she robs of her gold necklace the little girl returning from the dancing-class. The deed is done in the little passage leading to St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield (you can visit the place today--Defoe haunts London) and her impulse is to kill the child as well. She does not, the impulse is very feeble, but conscious of the risk the child has run she becomes most indignant with the parents for "leaving the poor little lamb to come home by itself, and it would teach them to take more care of it another time." How heavily and preten-

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[20]George Edward B. Saintsbury, The Peace of the Augustans (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1916), pp. 108-109.

[21]Arthur Wellesley Secord, Studies in the Narrative Method of Defoe (University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, Vol. IX, No. 1. Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1924).

> tiously a modern psychologist would labour to express this! It just runs off Defoe's pen.[22]

An excellent critical study in 1929 by Paul Dottin, The Life and Strange and Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe,[23] was written in French and translated by Louise Ragan. The minor novels as well as the major works are discussed in depth.

A flowery tribute by Walter De La Mare helped to encourage a popular revival of interest in Defoe. De La Mare wrote about Alexander Selkirk, Crusoe's prototype, as follows:

> As time went on, however, Selkirk's spirits began to revive, as human spirits, please Heaven, are apt to revive even in the most adverse of circumstances. He vanquished his blues, he set to work, kept tally of his days, and, like Orlando, cut his name in the trees.[24]

De La Mare wrote a rather poetic book but added little to the knowledge about Defoe and his works.

Virginia Woolf wrote a controversial chapter on Robinson Crusoe in The Common Reader: Second Series in which she reduced Crusoe to a dull man concerned mainly with

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[22] E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927), pp. 92-93.

[23] Paul Dottin, The Life and Strange and Surprising Adventures of Daniel Defoe, trans. by Louise Ragan (New York: Macaulay Company, 1929).

[24] Walter De La Mare, Desert Islands and Robinson Crusoe (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1930), p. 28.

making an earthenware pot. She wrote:

> The mere suggestion--peril and solitude and a desert island--is enough to rouse in us the expectation of some far land on the limits of the world; of the sun rising and the sun setting; of man, isolated from his kind, brooding alone upon the nature of society and the strange ways of men. Before we open the book we have perhaps vaguely sketched out the kind of pleasure we expect it to give us. We read; and we are rudely contradicted on every page. There are no sunsets and no sunrises; there is no solitude and no soul. There is, on the contrary, staring us full in the face nothing but a large earthenware pot.[25]

She also wrote a chapter in praise of Moll Flanders in The Common Reader: First Series.[26]

John Robert Moore was the first critic of the twentieth century to study and write of Defoe and his works in many articles and an excellent biography: Daniel Defoe: Citizen of the Modern World.[27] His criticism is excellent and important to every student of Defoe.

The outstanding modern biography is the one by James Sutherland[28] which was first published in 1937 with a second edition in 1950. He had access to facts not known

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[25]Virginia Woolf, The Common Reader: Second Series (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1932), p. 54.

[26]Virginia Woolf, The Common Reader: First Series (London: Hogarth Press, 1957).

[27]John Robert Moore, Daniel Defoe: Citizen of the Modern World (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

[28]James Sutherland, Defoe (London: Methuen & Company, 1950).

to the nineteenth-century biographers. The scholarship is excellent.

The other well-known biography is Daniel Defoe by Brian Fitzgerald,[29] which is accurate in facts but in the interpretation and criticism is rather strange at times. Fitzgerald has strong anti-capitalist political prejudices and views Defoe and Robinson Crusoe in that light.

Ian Watt in The Rise of the Novel contributes a scholarly study of themes and philosophies in Moll Flanders and Robinson Crusoe. He particularly stresses economic individualism as in the following example:

> That Robinson Crusoe, like Defoe's other main characters, Moll Flanders, Roxana, Colonel Jacque and Captain Singleton, is an embodiment of economic individualism hardly needs demonstration. All Defoe's heroes pursue money...and they pursue it very methodically according to the profit and loss book-keeping which Max Weber considered to be the distinctive technical feature of modern capitalism. Defoe's heroes, we observe, have no need to learn this technique; whatever the circumstances of their birth and education, they have it in their blood, and keep us more fully informed of their present stocks of money and commodities than any other characters in fiction.[30]

The first published book-length study of Defoe's themes and philosophy is Defoe and the Nature of Man by

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[29] Fitzgerald, op. cit.

[30] Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), p. 63.

Maximillian E. Novak.[31] He has recently published many articles dealing with the works of Defoe, particularly his economic theories. He is the current leading scholar on Defoe. His work is important because it deals with the novels and traces themes through Defoe's works. He discusses the minor novels as well as the two major ones.

Research into the works is just now beginning. Criticism of the novels before 1930 is almost non-existent. The early biographies are inadequate and written to either praise or revile Defoe, not to present the facts.

Modern studies of several themes such as gentility,[32] marriage,[33] crime and punishment,[34] necessity, love, gratitude, and nature[35] have been made, but no detailed study of the theme of isolation as a general theme in

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[31]Maximillian E. Novak, Defoe and The Nature of Man (London: Oxford University Press, 1963).

[32]Lew Girdler, "Daniel Defoe's Theories of Gentility" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1950).

[33]Spiro Peterson, "Defoe's Roxana and Its Eighteenth-Century Sequels: A Critical and Bibliographical Study" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, Cambridge, 1953).

[34]Beth Ann Croskey Bassein, "Crime and Punishment in the Novels of Defoe, Fielding, and Godwin" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of Missouri, 1961).

[35]Novak, op. cit.

Defoe's work has been made. This paper, then, is for the purpose of showing why isolation as a theme is important to Defoe, how he uses it, and how his own isolated life affected his attitude toward his characters.

There is no definitive edition of Defoe's works, nor is there a complete bibliography of Defoe or his works. Books, periodicals, and unpublished dissertations have been obtained from the collections and inter-library loans from the libraries at University of the Pacific, Stanislaus State College, and the California State Library at Sacramento.

CHAPTER II

SYMBOLS OF ISOLATION

Defoe uses several symbols throughout his works to express isolation of his characters. The general symbols to be discussed in this chapter are the ocean, the island, the city, time, and names of people and places.

I. THE OCEAN

The ocean in Defoe symbolizes God's approval or disapproval of the behavior of the main character. The ocean is used symbolically in two ways--a calm sea as a symbol of goodness and life, and a stormy sea as a symbol of sin and death. When a storm occurs at sea, it is to serve as a warning to the main character. Even the minor characters recognize the significance of the warning. In Robinson Crusoe the master says to Crusoe after the storm:

> You ought never to go to sea any more; you ought to take this for a plain and visible token that you are not to be a seafaring man....perhaps this is all befallen us on your account, like Jonah in the ship of Tarshish....I would not set my foot in the same ship with thee again for a thousand pounds.[36]

Crusoe's reputation as a "Jonah" separates him from the rest

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[36]Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe (New York: The New American Library of World Literature, 1961), p. 19. All further references to this novel are to this edition, hereafter referred to as Robinson Crusoe.

of the sailors, who do not want to be involved with such a person. Crusoe goes back to sea anyway and is shipwrecked on the island as punishment for disobeying the warning.

When the sea is calm, God is blessing the action of the characters. Crusoe has a calm voyage home after he has repented and been given deliverance from his island. Moll Flanders has a calm voyage after her repentance in Newgate as she is delivered safely to the New World. Captain Singleton enjoys good weather for his voyages as long as he tends to his business of piracy and does not plan mutiny. Roxana's calm voyage to Holland across the Channel at the end of the story as she escapes from her daughter is a deliverance by God from her plight.

The calm sea is also a symbol of success in business. Goods move safely to their destinations. However, a businessman must keep in mind that his fortunes can change, and he may be plunged into bankruptcy if his actions are not pleasing to God. Alan McKillop states:

> Defoe's favorite figure of the dangerous ocean of trade reminds us that the tradesman or projector has something in common with the adventurer or outcast who is the central figure of the novels.[37]

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[37]Alan Dugald McKillop, The Early Masters of English Fiction (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1956), p. 4.

The adventurer and the businessman must risk both life and fortune upon the sea if they are to succeed. When the voyage is successful, they earn great fortunes; when fate is against them, they go down to disaster. A problem is that many businessmen risk their fortunes on the ship which is wrecked because of Crusoe's sin. Are all of these men also guilty of sin? Defoe never asks or answers that question.

The sea is not for everyone to travel. Crusoe says that his father told him:

> It was for men of desperate fortunes on one hand, or of aspiring, superior fortunes on the other, who went abroad upon adventures, to rise by enterprise, and make themselves famous in undertakings of a nature out of the common road.[38]

Crusoe is from the middle class and should not have gone to sea. Moll Flanders and Captain Singleton are in desperate situations because they are from the lower class. They have no family or friends to help them and so must risk everything in the business world. Roxana is a woman of superior fortune who does not risk her fortune by taking it on the sea; she prudently leaves diamonds and money in the care of someone on land so that she will never be penniless. The sea is for those who are in trade, and those who go as mere adventurers or gentlemen with no thought of business will be in difficulty.

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[38] Robinson Crusoe, p. 38.

The warning of impending disaster is a storm at sea. Only once is a storm mentioned on land when Roxana is in imminent danger of having her past revealed by her daughter. She says, "It never blew a Storm of Wind, but I expected the Fall of some Stack of Chimneys, or some part of the House wou'd bury me in its Ruins."[39] The storm that she expects because of her sins does not come to her on land. The worry about the storm occurs after an earlier episode in which she was warned by a storm at sea; thus it is clear that she understands the significance of the storm.

Sea-sickness is the physical sign of a character feeling soul-sick. Jemmy, Moll's gentleman husband, is in despair at being transported and becomes sea-sick, but Moll does not because she is looking forward to doing business and making her fortune. Crusoe's first warning is sea-sickness as he begins to feel guilty about having disobeyed his father. Roxana and Amy both become sea-sick and Amy confesses:

> Heaven! I go to Heaven! No, no, If I am drown'd, I am damn'd! Don't you know what a wicked Creature I have been? I have been a Whore to two men, and have liv'd a wretched abominable Life of Vice and Wickedness for fourteen Years; O Madam, you know it.

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[39]Daniel Defoe, Roxana (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 260, hereafter referred to as Roxana.

> and God knows it; and now I am to die; to be drown'd; O! what will become of me? I am undone for Ever![40]

This seems to be the only episode in the novels where the storm at sea is used to warn two people instead of singling out one. But after they land, Roxana makes the following observation:

> Nor did this Incident do either Amy or me much Service; for the Danger being over, the Fears of Death vanish'd with it; ay, and our Fear of what was beyond Death also; our Sence of the Life we had liv'd, went off, and with our Return to Life, our wicked Taste of Life return'd, and we were both the same as before, if not worse: So certain is it, that the Repentance which is brought about by the meer Apprehensions of Death, wears off as those Apprehensions wear off; and Death-bed Repentance, or Storm-Repentance, which is much the same, is seldom true.[41]

Defoe's characters never achieve a real repentance until they are too old to do much that is wrong.

In all of Captain Singleton's years at sea, he seems to have miraculously escaped most of the storms. A storm damages the ship just before the mutiny takes place which causes Singleton to be set ashore on Madagascar. Singleton resolves to murder the captain because the captain has beaten and tortured him. He tries to find a method of killing, but is unable to obtain any sort of weapon or

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[40] Ibid., p. 125.

[41] Ibid., p. 128.

poison. Before he is able to commit the planned crime, a violent storm lasting for six days causes the ship to be damaged and forces the captain to stop for repairs. While the ship is riding at anchor in the harbor, sixteen men, including Singleton, are discovered to have plotted against the captain, are condemned to die, and are set ashore in the belief that they will soon perish from starvation and exposure.

Singleton recognizes that the storm has saved him from committing a crime and says, "Providence, either for his sake, or for mine, always frustrated my Designs."[42] That storm is caused by God's picking out Singleton for special treatment and taking care to see that he commits no crime for which he will be hanged immediately.

The sea also separates the characters from their criminal friends who are left on the land and gives the characters an opportunity to meditate upon past sins.

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[42]Daniel Defoe, Captain Singleton (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1963), p. 11, hereafter referred to as Captain Singleton.

II. THE ISLAND

The standard literary device of utopian literature for the location of an ideal society uncorrupted by the civilization of the day has been the island.[43] The usual method of procedure is to have a man or group of men left (usually by shipwreck) on a strange island where they encounter the people and institutions of a perfect world. The exact location of the island is never given and often is somewhere in the mystical realm of the gods.

Defoe is responsible for three innovations in utopian literature: the tropical desert island, the man alone, and the use of a natural setting rather than a city created by man. The action of most utopian novels takes place on an island in the temperate zone where the inhabitants have established cities and have a flourishing civilization. Defoe was different from other writers in choosing a hot climate where little was required for shelter and little difficulty was encountered in raising food. The island is a desert island in the sense that it lacks many plants and animals (but Crusoe supplies some of these from the ship and makes a comfortable life for himself).

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[43] See Plato, Timaeus and Critias (both about Atlantis); Thomas More, Utopia (1516); Francis Bacon, New Atlantis (1624-29); James Harrington, Oceana (1656); Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels (1726).

His books are also different from the picaresque tales dealing with a person traveling from one adventure to another through the civilized world. The conflicts found in both utopian and picaresque works are man against man or man against institutions, not man versus nature. G. H. Maynadier points out:

> What Defoe did in Robinson Crusoe that was new in picaresque novels was to send his hero to a desert island in the tropics, thus setting a fashion for "desert-island" tales that has lasted to our own day.[44]

When in his later novel Captain Singleton Defoe has a small group of men abandoned on the island of Madagascar, he presents the problems of daily living which are essentially the same ones that he contrives for Crusoe to meet. In this instance he arranges for several men to work on boat building and food collecting, and this lessens the interest.

When Crusoe is wrecked on his island, he finds no society at all, ideal or otherwise. Novak states:

> Many writers on economics and politics had located their utopia on an island isolated from western civilization, but it was Defoe's unique contribution to begin his with a single man.[45]

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[44] G. H. Maynadier, "Introduction," to Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe, Part I, Vol. I of The Works of Daniel Defoe (New York: The Jenson Society, 1903), p. xxi.

[45] Maximillian E. Novak, "Robinson Crusoe and Economic Utopia," Kenyon Review, XXV (Summer, 1963), 474.

Crusoe is completely alone for twenty-five years until he finds Friday. During the two or three years that Friday is with him, Crusoe does his best to teach his servant the ways of English civilization. Nowhere does Defoe present an idealization of the "noble savage." The people are not the beautiful native girls and strong, handsome men living a life of ease in an exotic, tropical paradise which are to be found in later desert-island romantic fiction. Cannibalism is the way of life for Friday's tribe. Defoe says almost nothing to commend this group except for praise for their strong paternal and tribal feelings.

The realism of the setting is the outstanding feature of this novel. Nineteenth-century critics spent much time trying to find the exact location of the island. The maps of the day (later proved to be slightly inaccurate) showed a group of unexplored islands off the coast of South America, and it is likely that Defoe selected one of the Caribbean islands to use for his background. Today the tourist bureaus of several islands assert that their island has the honor to be Crusoe's island. The description in Robinson Crusoe is specific enough to apply to many islands yet vague enough to avoid fixing of one island as authentic. Defoe's description is not accidental but is based on his reading of many accounts of travelers. Defoe's knowledge of geography is commented on by Ernest A. Baker who notes:

> He knew more about the various regions of the globe than the hardiest explorer, whose knowledge might be more peculiar but was far less extensive. Defoe had a library full of books; he kept himself abreast of the latest extensions of knowledge; he studied the maps of recent explorers so intelligently that he was able to make conjectures about unknown seas and countries which time has confirmed.[46]

Although it is difficult to take a particular scene and select an element that is not realistic (except for Defoe's occasional errors such as having rice and barley planted in the same field and having penguins on a tropical island in the Atlantic Ocean) there is a strong symbolic element associated with the island. Benjamin Boyce states:

> Crusoe, having earlier been the mythic figure of man born unwillingly into a strange and unfriendly universe (Defoe calls attention to the mythic by having the island episode commence on the anniversary of Crusoe's birth), at this point becomes another symbolic figure, the man whose laboriously and painfully achieved self-confidence in this difficult world is threatened by new conditions, new enemies.[47]

The thirtieth of September seems to have had unusual significance for Defoe (there are several critics who suggest that this date may have been Defoe's birthday). When Crusoe arrives on the island, he becomes more than a man--he becomes a symbolic Adam, the first man in a new

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[46] Ernest A. Baker, The History of the English Novel (London: H. F. and G. Witherby Ltd., 1929), III, 150.

[47] Benjamin Boyce, "The Question of Emotion in Defoe," Studies in Philology, L (January, 1953), 51.

world; and he also appears as Everyman, the religious pilgrim making a journey to salvation. E. M. W. Tillyard states:

> What differentiates Crusoe is the impression it conveys of symbolic meaning. Crusoe is a typical figure as Moll Flanders and Roxana are not, and is nearer to Bunyan's Christian than to them. The island, too, is not merely realistic but symbolises [sic] a human state of isolation. It thus has a lingering kinship (and probably through Bunyan) with the old allegories of man as a fortress, a city, or an island.[48]

Many articles have been written on the relation between Defoe and Crusoe. All of Defoe's main characters are essentially extensions of his own personality. Defoe did not see himself as the half-mad Selkirk on whom he bases the novel. Leslie Stephen writes:

> Defoe tells us very emphatically that in Robinson Crusoe he saw a kind of allegory of his own fate. He had suffered from solitude of soul. Confinement in his prison is represented in the book by confinement on an island....We may infer, what is probable from other cases, that a man living fifteen years by himself, like Crusoe, would either go mad or sink into the semi-savage state. De Foe really describes a man in prison, not in solitary confinement. We should not be so pedantic as to call for accuracy in such matters; but the difference between the fiction and what we believe would have been the reality is significant.[49]

Crusoe undergoes no change in personality during the

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[48] E. M. W. Tillyard, The Epic Strain in the English Novel (Fair Lawn, New Jersey: Essential Books, Inc., 1958), pp. 28-29.

[49] Leslie Stephen, Hours in a Library (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, [1874]), I, 50-52.

twenty-seven or twenty-eight years[50] that he is on the island. He does not revert to the savage state but remains in complete control of his faculties. He also never seems to age in physical prowess or mental attitudes.

Another symbolic element is that the island provides all of the necessities for Crusoe to have his "daily bread," but there is no luxury at one extreme or starvation at the other. The ship providentially stays on the reef in such a position that Crusoe can get to it and bring in the provisions as he needs them.

He also brings two cats, a dog, and a parrot which might have served as companions had he not chosen to ignore them. Paul Dottin sums up Crusoe's attitude toward animals:

> Beauties of nature did not stir him, and his love for animals was from the culinary or the gastronomic point of view; he divided them into two classes, those that were good to eat and those that were tasteless or tough. He could see no reasons for going into ecstacies over some winged denizen of the woods without first ascertaining whether it would be better broiled or roasted.[51]

Crusoe is not one of those persons whose love for animals

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[50]There is an inconsisteney in the novel on the length of time. When Crusoe left the island, he said that he was there twenty-eight years, two months, nineteen days, but this does not fit the time sequence of the various sections. For a discussion of this see Dewey Ganzel, "Chronology in Robinson Crusoe," Philological Quarterly, XL (October, 1961), 495-512.

[51]Dottin, op. cit., p. 209.

would have him regard the animals as companions. To serve the purpose of the myth of the isolated man, Crusoe must remain apart from any type of companionship. The animals must not be substitute human beings; thus Defoe is able to maintain the symbolism of complete isolation.

Friday, the faithful servant, is treated as a sub-species; he is not quite human. It would seem natural that a man deprived of companionship would welcome another person as an equal, but this is not the case. Crusoe treats the savage as a slave. Crusoe does not bother to ask Friday what his name is; instead, he gives him a label, not a real name. As far as Crusoe is concerned, he is still isolated from humanity until the Europeans arrive on the island.

The island is also a microcosm with Crusoe as the supreme ruler. The economic and political aspects of Crusoe as monarch will be amplified in the next chapter.

Defoe emphasizes the fact that isolation on an island is not desired by man because mankind has a social nature. When a ship arrives from England, Crusoe discovers that a group of five mutinous sailors have been put ashore to await sentencing by him as governor of the island. Crusoe could have ruled the tiny colony of sailors for an indefinite period, but Crusoe tells them that the law states that they should be hanged. Crusoe says:

> They humbly implored my mercy. But I told them I knew not what mercy to show them; for, as for myself, I had resolved to quit the island with all my men,

> and had taken passage with the captain to go for England. I had some inclination to give them their lives, if they thought they could shift on shore.
>
> They seemed very thankful for it, said they would much rather venture to stay there than to be carried to England to be hanged; so I left it on that issue.[52]

He leaves the island as soon as possible in order to get back to England. (However, he wanders for seven years before he arrives home and finds all of his family gone except for two sisters and two of the children of one of his brothers.)

The island of Madagascar in Captain Singleton is not imbued with the symbolic quality of Crusoe's island. The men stranded on the island go through the business of finding food and building a boat, but the account is less interesting than that in Robinson Crusoe. The island serves as a device for rescuing Singleton from his planned life of crime, but as a symbol it is not so important as the island in Robinson Crusoe.

The symbolic island in Roxana is the dwelling in Paris where Roxana and Amy stay in seclusion for about two years, seeing only their paramours. Roxana suggests to the Prince de _____ that to avoid gossip she hide indoors. Roxana says:

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[52] Robinson Crusoe, p. 269.

> If he thought fit, I would be wholly within-Doors, and have it given out, that I was oblig'd to go to England, to sollicit my Affairs there, after my Husband's Misfortune; and that I was not expected there again for at least a Year or two: This he lik'd very well, only, he said, that he would by no means have me confin'd; that it would injure my Health; and that I should then take a Country-House....I put off the Country-House, which would have been to remove myself farther from him, and have less of his Company; so I made the House be, as it were, shut up.[53]

Roxana and Amy are as isolated from human society except for the Prince and his servant as are Crusoe and Friday.

Newgate Prison is Moll Flanders' "island," and she uses this "island" experience in much the same way that the other islands are used. She has a religious experience similar to that of Crusoe. She says:

> It was now, for the first time, I felt any real signs of repentance. I now began to look back upon my past life with abhorrence.[54]

The prisoners in Newgate may also be compared to the cannibals in Robinson Crusoe. They are considered to be less than human by Moll who, in spite of her long criminal career, considers herself to be much better than the "hell-hounds," as she calls them.

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[53] Roxana, p. 67.

[54] Daniel Defoe, Moll Flanders (New York: Random House, 1950), p. 273, hereafter referred to as Moll Flanders.

III. THE CITY

The city serves to show man is still an isolated individual in the midst of crowds. People should be a source of help and comfort, but those to whom one would naturally turn for aid turn out to be the betrayers of trust. Defoe's characters soon learn that they must look after their own interests and depend upon no one.

There is considerable disagreement among critics about Defoe's descriptions of the city. Bruce McCullough writes:

> Moll's life is too much isolated from that of her fellow creatures, even from that of her fellow criminals. Also it is deficient in the sense of place. The presence of London is not felt as it is in A Tale of Two Cities, or as Paris is felt to permeate The Ambassadors, of Henry James. Such a lack of atmosphere is the natural result of Moll's being so little aware of her surroundings.[55]

Willa Cather, who generally writes disparagingly of Defoe's works, says about the cities in Roxana:

> There are no scenes in Roxanna's [sic] narrative, and there is no atmosphere. Her adventures in France are exactly like those in England; one is not conscious of the slightest change in her surroundings or way of living. Defoe had travelled, and so does his heroine. But all countries and all cities are alike to Roxanna, just as all well-to-do men are alike to her.[56]

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[55] Bruce McCullough, Representative English Novelists: Defoe to Conrad (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946), pp. 17-18.

[56] Willa S. Cather, On Writing (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), p. 80.

To say that there is no atmosphere is to misinterpret one of the points of the story. When Roxana is independent, she travels and participates in business transactions, but when she is married or being kept by a nobleman, she is as much a (voluntary) prisoner in her house as Moll Flanders is a prisoner in Newgate. The atmosphere is one of a terrible boredom caused by a surfeit of pleasure. There is nothing new to delight one. Roxana becomes popular because her harem costume is something that the members of the upper class have not seen; word of it spreads throughout the nobility so that even the king comes to see it. This sterile world insulated from the business world of the middle class, the felonies of the criminal class, and the poverty of the lower class is the city of the upper class. The unpleasant elements are simply ignored as one rides in a closed coach from one party to another. Even in the home, the servants are treated as though they do not exist. In the two years Susan works as a maid in Roxana's house, she never sees her mistress. The servants are of no more consequence than the natives are to Crusoe.

Moll Flanders' city is the business section of the middle class, the slums of the lower class, and Newgate Prison. Robert R. Columbus points out:

> As narrator she continues to see not the London streets but the objects in shop windows and the alleys convenient for escape; she does not see the interior of an inn but any objects within

> worth taking. Moll can still only see the objects for which she has lusted; men, jewels, pieces of silk, silver, rings, lace, watches.[57]

Moll has no time to contemplate the beauties of nature or the architectural works of man. She is concerned with the things that will help her to survive. A building doorway is to be admired not because of its classic lines, but because of the hiding place or escape route to be found behind it. One of the most significant comments is by Robert P. Utter:

> From an evening's reading of Moll Flanders you get a series of pictures as vivid as if you had been sitting for hours with motion pictures of Defoe's England flashing and changing before your eyes.[58]

The important words in that paragraph are "Defoe's England." There is a strong autobiographical element in the accounts of Moll's travels through the streets. The scenes also "flash" by because the impression left with the reader is that of Moll running to escape being caught by her latest victim. The city is not a pleasant place in which to live, but a trap for the unwary. Those who would escape the corruptions of the city must avoid it and find a safe hiding place. To walk out in public is to risk being

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[57] Robert R. Columbus, "Conscious Artistry in Moll Flanders," Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, III (Summer, 1963), 418.

[58] Robert Palfrey Utter, Pearls and Pepper (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1924), p. 211.

preyed upon by criminals or, if one is already a criminal, to being recognized and taken to prison. The life of the city, then, isolates each human being from the society of others because no one can be trusted. Bassein mentions the fact that every person is a potential enemy because "not only officers of justice but every private citizen had the power to apprehend felons."[59]

One of the institutions of the city, Newgate Prison, has a particular symbolic meaning. Newgate was the prison in which Defoe spent six months for writing The Shortest Way with Dissenters. Both Defoe and his character Moll considered Newgate "an emblem of hell itself."[60] Moll was brought to think of repentance by "the hellish noise, the roaring, swearing, and clamour, the stench and nastiness, and all the dreadful crowd of afflicting things that I saw there."[61] Newgate serves as a sort of purgatory for Moll, although the Puritan Defoe would object strongly to the use of that word.

Newgate appears twice in Moll Flanders. Moll is born there. When she returns as an adult, she undergoes a spiritual rebirth and is symbolically born again. Terence Martin says:

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[59] Bassein, op. cit., p. 16.

[60] Moll Flanders, p. 261.

[61] Ibid.

> Moll has now retraced the path of her adult life; her career of theft...has brought her back to the original place from which she set out to be a gentlewoman....She must come full circle on her whole life. Moll will not be able to make a new start until she has returned to her birthplace, Newgate.[62]

The prison is, of course, the place where society puts those it has rejected because of their behavior. When Moll is in prison, she is able to send messages to her "governess" outside, but otherwise the rest of the world has nothing to do with her. She saves herself because she has money to bribe the judge and jailers, not because she has won the affection of anyone who would be interested in saving her life.

The law is not a useful tool, but a symbol of tyranny to the lower classes. There is only one refuge from the persecution--a section of London called "The Mint." Burton Rascoe describes it as follows:

> De Foe, like others in his predicament, fled to "The Mint," a district in London peopled by thieves, thugs, and rogues of every description and of both sexes, a district so tough that the police scarcely dared to enter it. Unwritten custom permitted a man to remain in "The Mint" before serious efforts were made to apprehend him. Meanwhile he could negotiate with his creditors and try to come to terms with them.[63]

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[62] Terence Martin, "The Unity of Moll Flanders," Modern Language Quarterly, XXII (June, 1961), 120.

[63] Burton Rascoe, Titans of Literature (London: George Rutledge and Sons, 1933), p. 362.

"The Mint" is the section where Moll and her assistants can easily dispose of their stolen property. When life becomes intolerable in the city, one might flee to "The Mint" and escape the law, but one would still be in danger from one's fellow inhabitants. There was no musical-comedy group of happy thieves preying on the rich but not on each other. The greatest victims of the criminals were the lower classes and other criminals. It is wise of Moll never to trust anyone when she joins a group; she escapes being arrested with them only because she thinks fast enough to escape.

The city as a symbol represents man's inhumanity to man and serves as a warning that each man must go alone or fall into disaster. From the king at the top of society to the lowest criminal in "The Mint," there is no person to whom one can turn for aid unless one has money to buy the assistance needed.

IV. NAMES

Names are important symbols of identity. The names in Defoe's writing are not symbolic in themselves, but in the way they are used.

The names of places are generally names of real places. The one place name which might be interpreted symbolically is Newgate--as a "new gate" through which Moll and Jemmy pass to their new life in the colonies. However,

it is doubtful whether Defoe intended that interpretation because Newgate was where he happened to be imprisoned and it was the most logical prison to use.

Many times a missing name is more significant than one which is given. One thing which gives Crusoe's island its utopian quality is that it has no name. In fact, the only thing connected with the island that has a name is Crusoe. The animals are never given names. (Crusoe values the parrot most because he can teach it to say his name.) His servant is given the label "Friday" because that is the day on which he is found. Whether he already has a name is of no concern to Crusoe. Friday's father is of so little importance that Crusoe does not bother to label him. Crusoe's attitude toward the two can be seen at the end of the stay on the island when he tells Friday that his father will stay on the island while Friday goes to England. Neither of them have anything to say about the arrangements; they are natives--not people.

The characters Roxana, Moll Flanders, and Captain Singleton are alike in that all three use names which are aliases. Roxana is the epithet that Susan acquires as a result of her dance while she was wearing a Turkish costume. Her last name is never given. Moll Flanders mentions that Moll is only one of several names that she assumes for purposes of protection. She does not tell her real name

or the other aliases except Betty. "Moll" means "a low-class girl" and is symbolic of her status.

Captain Singleton has a name which suggests his isolation. He is forced to assume a name because he was carried off by gypsies when he was a small child and does not know his real name.

The minor characters are also largely unidentified. There are Jemmy, Amy, and William the Quaker, but most of the characters are known by such titles as "my husband," "my governess," "the captain," or "my linen-draper husband." Moll sometimes uses the "Beggar's Language," also called "Peddler's French," to describe her companions. H. T. Webster says concerning the term "governess": "The bawd (she was sometimes more euphemistically known as a governess or schoolmistress) usually kept a seraglio of her own."[64] Moll always wishes to appear as a gentlewoman and in her desire for respectability would prefer the more socially acceptable word.

Crusoe is the only one who cares about keeping his name, which action is symbolic of attachment to family. (It should be pointed out that his last name had been changed from the German Kreutznaer to Crusoe.) "Kreutz"

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[64] Herbert Thompson Webster, "The Eighteenth-Century Underworld: A Study in Criminal Manners from the Polite and Vulgar Letters of the Time" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1934), p. 95.

and "Crus" both translate as "cross," which fit in with the religious symbolism. Robinson Crusoe mentions his parents, two brothers, and two sisters, but he does not tell their names.

Captain Singleton never has any family--neither parents, nor a wife and children. This lack of attachment is shown symbolically by the "single" part of his name. He drifts into crime because he has no person to teach him the proper way of life. Bassein states:

> Particularly in the case of Singleton the results of an unfortunate upbringing augmented by lack of permanent residence are vividly pictured.[65]

Moll and Roxana both have a large number of children (it is difficult to determine the number in either family). They manage to dispose of their children without too much difficulty and only Roxana's Susan (her namesake) comes back to annoy her mother. Roxana says of one son:

> I had shown a general Neglect of the Child, thro' all the gay years of my London Revels; except that I sent Amy to look upon it now and then, and to pay for its Nursing.[66]

She usually refers to a child as "it," which shows a lack of feeling for the child and her lack of maternal instinct.

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[65] Bassein, op. cit., pp. 142-143.

[66] Roxana, p. 263.

It is obvious that Defoe, who changed his own last name in order to appear more aristocratic,[67] planned the naming of his characters carefully and omitted the names of those who did not matter in order to make his main characters stand apart from the masses.

V. TIME

Time is a commodity that must be spent and accounted for in the chronometric world of Defoe's novels. The calendar and the clock are always at hand, even on a desert island. Crusoe shows his great concern for the passing of time when he says:

> After I had been there about ten or twelve days, it came into my thoughts, that I should lose my reckoning of time for want of books...but to prevent this...upon the sides of this square post I cut

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[67] Sutherland on pages two and three of Defoe states:

> For the first forty years of his life he was known to the world as Daniel Foe. Then, for reasons best known to himself, he altered his name to the more impressive, and certainly more aristocratic, Daniel Defoe, and his contemporaries rather slowly responded to the change. "Defoe," of course, was an easy transition from the "D. Foe" which had been his original signature. On his father's side, at any rate, his blood was free from all mixture with aristocracy....His mother was apparently of rather gentler birth, for Defoe speaks of a pack of hounds kept by her father, and even goes so far as to suggest that he had some of the blood of Sir Walter Raleigh in his veins. It may be so; but by the time it reached Defoe it must have been running rather thin, and a few drops of Raleigh's blood were not enough to modify the sound middle-class stock which was Defoe's heritage.

> every day a notch with my knife, and every seventh notch was a long again as the rest... and thus I kept my calendar.[68]

He plans his work so that on every Sabbath day he may rest and set his mind on religious thoughts. He is always careful to mention the date and approximate time of each action and even keeps a sort of account book of the way his time is spent. Idleness was generally thought to be anathema by the Puritans, and Crusoe seems to follow this precept by making certain that he cannot be accused of wasting his time in unfruitful leisure. He keeps very busy building extra shelter and fences, partly to use the time profitably in work. Maximillian E. Novak, however, takes exception to the interpretation that Crusoe's work has a Calvinist basis. He states:

> It would be more accurate to state that Defoe seems to have believed that most men had a drive to work, or an "instinct of workmanship," accompanied by a hatred of idleness.[69]

When one sees that Crusoe carefully observes the Sabbath in a Puritan manner by doing no work, it is difficult to see how one could discount entirely the religious basis for Crusoe's actions.

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[68] Robinson Crusoe, p. 67.

[69] Maximillian E. Novak, "Robinson Crusoe and Economic Utopia," Kenyon Review, XXV (Summer, 1963), 478.

Under the unusual circumstances of the story, Crusoe has an extraordinary amount of time to use. As Arthur W. Secord states:

> Obviously Defoe is attempting in the "Strange and Surprising Adventures" of the York mariner...to outdo anything to be found in print. To exceed the experiences of Selkirk and the others, which are set forth as possible sources of "Robinson Crusoe," Crusoe had no need of staying nearly a third of a century in solitude; for the hero of Juan Fernandez was rescued after but four years, and Peter de Serrano after seven; and no other castaway is known to have survived so long as that.[70]

Time has its marked effect in the development of this novel. The passage of time seems to have no physical effect on Crusoe; he seems no older at the end of his stay on the island than he is at the beginning. The long imprisonment on the island serves only as a spiritual opportunity because it gives him time to think, and this exercise of his mind leads to repentance and eventual salvation. Thus the physical aspect of Crusoe does not mature, but the spiritual part does. Only when the mariner is separated from the distractions of the busy world of England does he have the opportunity of finding repentance. Bonamy Dobrée says in a discussion of Colonel Jacque which applies equally to Robinson Crusoe:

> You can repent only if you have the leisure--"Here, I say, I had leisure to repent", Jacque tells us more than once--and the security, to contemplate God.

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[70]Secord, op. cit., p. 32.

> Moreover, Defoe is always careful to distinguish between real repentance and mere fear of your sins finding you out, or even panic at the idea of divine retribution, the first being attained only after the preliminary stages of fear of various kinds.[71]

Thus solitude is the factor which eventually is responsible for making Crusoe's salvation possible.

Moll Flanders has a similar experience of repentance when she is in prison. Her prison sentence serves the same purpose as Crusoe's long island isolation. However, Moll does have the distressing problem of physical deterioration which Crusoe does not seem to have. Moll depends upon her beauty to attract new men as husbands or customers, and she goes to considerable effort to maintain her appearance. She tells of her problem when she is getting ready to meet the gentleman she had previously robbed of a purse of gold:

> I dressed me to all the advantage possible, I assure you, and for the first time used a little art; I say for the first time, for I had never yielded to the baseness of paint before, having always had vanity enough to believe I had no need of it.[72]

As Moll loses her physical attractiveness and beauty, she begins to gain in spiritual power. In prison she suffers physical degradation, but through a sort of metamorphosis, and emerges with a strong experience of regeneration

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[71]Bonamy Dobrée, English Literature in the Early Eighteenth Century, 1700-1740 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 416.

[72]Moll Flanders, pp. 223-24.

into a new life based on religious principles.

Roxana does not account for time in the meticulous manner of Crusoe and Moll Flanders. She is vague about her daily activities, listing only major projects which take a considerable time. After she has gone to Holland to sell the jewels, she writes, "All this Work took me up near half a year."[73] She does not explain what she does to occupy the time when she is not negotiating jewel sales, where she lives, or whom she has met. She has merely accounted for the lapse of six months of time. This lack of information about her daily life is one of the chief weaknesses of the book.

Captain Singleton is a book which is vague about the daily occupations, but because the main character is a sailor, it can be assumed that marine duties take much of his time. This novel differs from the others in that during the long periods of separation from land Singleton has a Quaker to talk to. Singleton's lack of early religious training gives him no moral code on which to rely; therefore, the Quaker serves the function of a conscience. The long hours at sea give the opportunity for conversion, and these talks lead to the realization of the importance of God. Singleton, however, has a slow "conversion," as is indicated

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[73] Roxana, p. 131.

by the fact that he does not retire from piracy until he is too old to take part in such hazardous activities.

Because Defoe wrote so rapidly that he occasionally forgot what he had written, he does not always keep the time sequences and durations accurately. Time in the novels often becomes a problem to the reader. For example, Defoe states that Crusoe was on the island twenty-eight years, two months, and nineteen days; yet by adding the times mentioned in each chapter, one can find only twenty-seven years, two months, nineteen days. (There are discrepancies other than time. Crusoe says that he is almost out of ink; yet twenty years later he gives written instructions to the ambassadors. When the ship leaves Brazil it has seventeen men; three die in a tornado, eleven leave the wreck, and Crusoe escapes. There is still the question of what happens to the other two men.[74])

It is difficult to establish time sequences for Captain Singleton and Roxana because large blocks of time are only vaguely accounted for.

A glaring miscalculation of time occurs in Roxana. The heroine is supposed to have been a mistress of

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[74]For a complete discussion of errors and inconsistencies see Harry F. Robins, "How Smart Was Robinson Crusoe?," Publication of Modern Language Association, LXVII (September, 1952), 782-789.

Charles II, yet historically this situation would have been impossible because she came to England as a small child in 1683 and Charles II died in 1685.

In spite of having errors and inconsistencies in facts, Defoe is consistent in his use of symbols. He uses only a few simple ones, and they mean the same in all of his novels. Although it is possible for twentieth-century readers to interpret many parts of the books in terms of Freudian or other systems of symbology, it is certain that no such interpretation was intended by Defoe. The only major symbols that he uses are the ocean, the island, the city, names, and time.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ISOLATION

I. ECONOMIC ISOLATION

The rise of Capitalism and the spread of Puritanism are the two factors having the greatest effect on the development of the theory (expounded by Adam Smith) of economic individualism. The most important new idea was that the individual was responsible for his own salvation--religious and economic.

The Puritans believed that to discharge one's secular duties well was also to labor for God. God in return blessed those who labored by granting them material success. R. H. Tawney comments on this aspect of Puritanism when he says:

> Puritanism in its later phases added a halo of ethical sanctification to the appeal of economic expediency, and offered a moral creed, in which the duties of religion and the calls of business ended their long estrangement in an unanticipated reconciliation. Its spokesmen pointed out, it is true, the peril to the soul involved in a single-minded concentration on economic interests. The enemy, however, was not riches, but the bad habits sometimes associated with them, and its warnings against an excessive preoccupation with the pursuit of gain wore more and more the air of after-thoughts, appended to teaching the main tendency and emphasis of which were little affected by these incidental qualifications. It insisted, in short, that money-making, if not free from spiritual dangers, was not

> a danger and nothing else, but that it could be, and ought to be, carried on for the greater glory of God.[75]

That Defoe believed in economic individualism is obvious from the actions and statements of his main characters. At the beginning all of them are reduced by uncontrollable circumstances to depths of extreme poverty and friendlessness from which they are forced to rise by individual effort. Crusoe is left alone on the island; Moll Flanders is left in a foster home; Singleton is stolen by gypsies who abandon him and force him to find a series of foster homes; and Roxana is deserted by her "fool husband," who leaves her with almost no money and five children to feed. For the average person in need there was public charity available for the poor in the parish where they were born. But Defoe's characters are not ordinary. Moll and Singleton are denied this assistance because Moll was born in Newgate Prison, which was not considered to be in any parish, and Singleton was stolen by gypsies and did not know where he was born. Thus these two characters must depend upon the charity of kind strangers to take them in until they are old enough to earn a living for themselves. Roxana is compelled to give up her children because she can no longer provide for them. The children cannot be kept

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[75] R. H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1926), pp. 239-240.

in the same foster home because four children were born in one parish and one in another. (She solves the problem of keeping her family together by having her maid take the children to the house of a relative, push them in the door, then run away.) She must hide from the creditors and sell her household goods in order to survive.

Defoe reduces his characters to a point where starvation is imminent, but he does not expect them to die. He expects human beings to survive by any possible means--legal or illegal, moral or immoral. He wrote in the Review on Saturday, September 15, 1711 (eight years before he wrote his first novel) as follows:

> What shall we say? "Give me not poverty, lest I steal," says the wise man; that is, if I am poor I shall be a thief. I tell you all, gentlemen, in your poverty the best of you all will rob your neighbour; nay to go farther, as I said once on the like occasion, you will not only rob your neighbour, but if in distress you will EAT your neighbour, ay, and say grace to your meat too. Distress removes from the soul all relation, affection, sense of justice, and all the obligations, either moral or religious, that secure one man against another.[76]

All of the characters soon learn that money is the only solution to their problems and that their duty is to obtain as much as possible. Moll at first does not realize

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[76]Daniel Defoe, The Best of Defoe's "Review," ed. William L. Payne (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 271. The quotation is from Volume VIII, Number 75 of the Review.

that money is so necessary. When she is at the home of the Mayoress, she learns all of the social graces better than the daughters of the house and expects to use these graces to make her way in the social world, but she is soon disappointed to learn that she can obtain work only as a servant and cannot marry well without a dowry. The elder brother of one of the families where she is a servant teaches her that she can obtain money by selling her favors.

After Roxana's experience with a fool for a husband, she never again makes an alliance that is not based upon financial reward for her. William Dawson states:

> His [Defoe's] women are frankly mercenary; they are coolly counting their profits when they seem to be most the slaves of passion; they know nothing of love that scorns banking accounts.[77]

Roxana equates love with money. The more money she has, the greater the love she possesses. When Roxana is telling of her affair with the Prince, she says:

> No Amour of such a Kind, sure, was ever carry'd up so high; the Prince knew no Bounds to his Munificence; he cou'd give me nothing, either for my wearing or using, or eating, or drinking, more than he had done from the Beginning.
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> His presents were, after that, in Gold.[78]

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[77] William James Dawson, The Makers of English Fiction (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1905), p. 15.

[78] Roxana, p. 75.

She extends her ideas as she describes the material wealth. "Amour" is the only word having to do with love, but Roxana believes that she is discussing a love affair.

Moll and Roxana obtain their money by working at an immoral profession, but Singleton does not even work to get his money; he steals it by piracy. However, he is not the adventurous devil-may-care pirate of most romantic fiction. R. P. Utter discusses Singleton's attitude toward piracy as follows:

> His piracy is an orderly traffic in silks and spices conducted with no more recklessness than one would expect of a sober-minded India merchant. For thrift and sagacity (provided, to be sure, by William the Quaker) it is Benjamin Franklin himself turned pirate. Where is the romance in all this? Obviously in the danger again, the one man single-handed against the world.[79]

Crusoe does not actually earn money while he is on the island, but he does have a plantation in Brazil which pays an excellent dividend. However, he does not lose his capitalistic orientation when he is alone. Novak states:

> Crusoe's labor, of course, can only be measured in connection with the useful products which he manufactures with it and the pleasure, in relation to the pains of his labor, which he derives from them. But Crusoe still thinks in terms of monetary reward.[80]

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[79]Utter, op. cit., pp. 207-208.

[80]Maximillian E. Novak, "Robinson Crusoe and Economic Utopia," Kenyon Review, XXV (Summer, 1963), 486.

Defoe understood that the circulation of money was the basis for trade and a prosperous business community. He advocated the payment of high wages so that potential customers would have the money to spend. This theory of economics, however, was not held by most of the upper classes. Dorothy Marshall points out:

> Parliament was quite willing that a great proportion of the people should live not much above subsistence level, since it was argued that only by the compelling fear of hunger could the poor be forced to undertake the long hours and arduous work that the export market demanded.[81]

In his novels Defoe has his characters take to crime rather than submit to the oppressive life of the poor laborer which was approved by Parliament. Although in his writings Defoe recommended the payment of high wages, he did not practice what he advocated for others. Rascoe states:

> It is interesting to note that De Foe as a manufacturer became wholeheartedly a manufacturer; that is, he paid slave wages and became gravely interested in the problem of increasing the efficiency and moral responsibility of the English workmen.[82]

Defoe is careful to point out that gold has no value in itself; it is worth something only if it can be traded. The best illustration of this is in Captain Singleton when

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[81]Dorothy Marshall, English People in the Eighteenth Century (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1956), p. 21.

[82]Rascoe, op. cit., p. 363.

Singleton wants to buy goods from the African natives and discovers to his dismay that the natives do not want his money. Finally the sailors realize that the money itself has no value and that they must find something which the natives will want. The cutter beats the pieces-of-eight out flat and cuts them into animal shapes and strings them into necklaces. The natives are then willing to trade goods for the jewelry which they can use for decoration. Singleton and the crew are helpless in the jungle until they discover the basis of trade, and only then can they join into the scheme of things and get the supplies they need to make the journey across Africa. Defoe seems to be saying that man cannot remain outside the social milieu and obtain what he needs; he must participate in the world of trade.

Moll also participates in trade as she exchanges her stolen articles for money. She does not keep the articles for personal use in most cases, but she uses them to get money to live on. She does not steal from the poor but only from those who can afford the loss. There is honor among the thieves in her small social group (although not among thieves in general); neither Moll nor her friends steal from each other. On the contrary, they help each other dispose of the items so that the police cannot catch the thief with his loot.

It might be argued that the thieves and parasites of society are necessary to keep some of the goods in circulation. The rich tend to collect more and more of the gold, silver, jewels, and other valuables and to store them away. When the thief steals a valuable object, he eventually provides employment for the policeman sent to apprehend him, the jailer to hold him, the cook to feed him in jail, the judge, and perhaps an executioner. There is also employment given to the underworld people who dispose of the stolen goods, change the form (such as re-setting diamonds), transport the items, and find a new buyer. The general public provides the money for the salaries of the justice officials and this keeps some of the money in circulation. When the item is money, it is something which cannot be easily traced and thus can be spent by anyone with less risk of detection. The money which the rich refuse to pay in salaries to the poor people can thus get to the lower classes through the services of the thieves. If the rich will not voluntarily keep their goods in circulation, the poor are doing the country an economic service by forcibly keeping trade lively and providing employment for many people.

The characters go after the things they need by any means--legal if possible, illegal if not. However, sometimes their habits of stealing lead them to excesses. Martin Price comments on the stealing when he says:

> Each of Defoe's central characters at some point passes the boundary between need and acquisitiveness, between the search for subsistence and the love of outlawry. And it is only in the coolness of retrospect that they can see the transgression. Defoe does not play satirically upon their defections; he knows these to be inevitable, terrifying so long as they can be seen with moral clarity, but hard to keep in such clear focus.[83]

The most amusing episode of this sort is Moll stealing the horse that she cannot use or get rid of. Moll says, "Never was poor thief more at a loss to know what to do with anything that was stolen."[84] She solves the problem by taking the horse to an inn and notifying its owner to come and get it.

One of the flaws in Defoe's Utopia of Crusoe's island is that his one-man republic cannot indulge in business. Crusoe has nobody to trade with. Friday has nothing to trade; he barely escapes from the cannibals and has no opportunity to bring any possessions with him. Trade must then wait for the arrival of Europeans. (In Defoe's works the only ones who know anything about trade are Europeans; non-whites learn trade only by being taught a little by the civilized man. They are never capable of learning more than the simplest things.)

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[83] Martin Price, To the Palace of Wisdom (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1964), p. 269.

[84] Moll Flanders, p. 241.

The Englishmen do not have to be taught trade--they just know how to conduct business transactions. Ian Watt sums up Defoe's position on trade as follows:

> That Robinson Crusoe, like Defoe's other main characters, Moll Flanders, Roxana, Colonel Jacque, and Captain Singleton, is an embodiment of economic individualism hardly needs demonstration. All Defoe's heroes pursue money....and they pursue it very methodically....Defoe's heroes, we observe, have no need to learn this technique; whatever the circumstances of their birth and education, they have it in their blood, and keep us more fully informed of their present stocks of money and commodities than any other characters in fiction.[85]

II. POLITICAL ISOLATION

The political system found throughout the novels is that of a monarchy. Although Crusoe declares that he is an absolute monarch, he is actually a limited monarch as the English king is. There is also a strong caste system which makes it difficult for one to rise above his station.

It is assumed that the English way of life is the best. A strong feeling of nationalism pervades the novels. Other nations may produce people who can become good servants if properly governed by Englishmen, but otherwise foreigners are untrustworthy, stupid, or vicious, and are easily fooled by Englishmen. Captain Singleton contains more prejudiced remarks than the other novels. A typical example

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[85] Watt, op. cit., p. 63.

of Singleton's remarks is as follows:

> Yet even in this State of Original Wickedness, I entertained such a settled Abhorrence of the abandon'd Vileness of the Portuguese, that I could not but hate them most heartily from the Beginning, and all my Life afterwards. They were so brutishly wicked, so base and perfidious, not only to Strangers, but to one another; so meanly submissive when subjected; so insolent, or barbarous and tyrannical when superior, that I thought there was something in them that shock'd my very Nature. Add to this, that 'tis natural to an Englishman to hate a Coward, it all joined together to make the Devil and a Portuguese equally my aversion.[86]

Defoe never explains why Englishmen are naturally good; he assumes that even when they are pirates, prostitutes, or thieves that they do their evil deeds from Necessity--not from having evil natures. He does not allow citizens of other countries to use the excuse of Necessity for their misdeeds. This assumption of the superiority of Englishmen is a reflection of the attitude of the English people, not a belief peculiar to Defoe.

Singleton's insistence on his good English nature sets him apart from the rest of the crew. He refers to the members of the ship's company as "I" and "they;" he does not say "we." When William the Quaker--an Englishman--comes aboard, Singleton has his first friend.

Crusoe sets up the English political system on his island with himself as king. He does not take himself

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[86] Captain Singleton, p. 8.

entirely seriously in this role, however. He says:

> My island was now peopled, and I thought myself very rich in subjects; and it was a merry reflection, which I frequently made, how like a king I looked. First of all, the whole country was my own mere property, so that I had an undoubted right of dominion. Secondly, my people were perfectly subjected. I was absolute lord and lawgiver; they all owed their lives to me, and were ready to lay down their lives, if there had been occasion of it, for me. It was remarkable, too, we had but three subjects, and they were of three different religions. My man Friday was a Protestant, his father was a pagan and a cannibal, and the Spaniard was a Papist. However, I allowed liberty of conscience throughout my dominions. But this is by the way.[87]

If Crusoe had been really interested in ruling his island, he could have remained on the island. Instead, he chooses to go back to England at the first opportunity. While he is on the island he does insist upon being the absolute ruler at first and later the patriarchal ruler. He allows no one to assist him and insists that all swear absolute obedience to him. His own moral code, however, prevents him from being tyrannical. He insists on a trial for the mutinous sailors. Novak comments on Crusoe's kingship as follows:

> Like the proprietors of Carolina, Crusoe bears little resemblance to the patriarchal ruler, since he has little affection for his people and no realization of the obligations which a monarch must assume.
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> Crusoe is correct in stating that he left the island as he found it but seems unaware that it is

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[87] Robinson Crusoe, p. 236.

> actually a democratic state just barely removed from the state of nature. And this seems to have been Defoe's concept of the ideal government.[88]

It is important to point out that Crusoe's statements of how firmly he rules the country do not correspond with his actions. He is more lenient to the mutineers than he wants to admit.

It would seem that after twenty-eight years of isolation from his countrymen Crusoe should be so happy to see them that he would beg them to admit him to their society. But Crusoe chooses to remain aloof and act as much like a king as he knows how. When he goes back to England, he does leave the sailors sufficient supplies to establish a colony with the idea that it might be profitable to him, but he does not want to organize a trading company, such as the East India Company, for his colony. He prefers to let the colonists solve their own problems while he goes back to civilization to make his own fortune independent of anyone else.

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[88]Maximillian E. Novak, "Crusoe the King and the Political Evolution of His Island," Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, II (Summer, 1962), 345.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL ISOLATION

I. SOCIAL CLASSES IN ENGLAND

The ambitious middle class which virtually controlled the economics of England in the early eighteenth century was for Defoe the group which best represented his Puritan concept that hard work equals success. Trade was the dominant occupation of this class. Many of the bourgeoisie became rich, and these people were soon able to rise into the upper class. No longer was a person born into a position in society from which there was no escape. By the early eighteenth century, the classes were still in existence, but the distinctions between the classes were not so sharply defined as they had been. In the Middle Ages it was not necessary to define "knight"; the term was understood. But in the eighteenth century a considerable amount of writing concerns the definition of "gentleman." The problem of defining social classes occurs throughout Defoe's writings. Lew Girdler summarizes Defoe's belief about social classes as follows:

> Defoe's theory of the relationship of birth to gentility may be summarized, then in this way, following the logical relation of the ideas rather than Defoe's own order. First, God created gentlemen superior to commoners, in the same way that God created certain heavenly bodies superior to others. Second, this initial superiority, Defoe is willing

> to grant for the sake of argument, gives to the man of high birth an advantage over other men, in the form of a different (Defoe suggests a hotter) blood than ordinary men enjoy. Third, high birth is necessary to the complete gentleman. Fourth, through misbehavior or through neglect of his opportunities, the man of high birth may forfeit his initial advantages and thus lose his claim to gentility.[89]

Defoe recognizes that although it is necessary to be born into a high position in order to be considered true nobility, it is possible for a person with money and social accomplishments to move in the upper social circles for a time. Defoe believes that it is the duty of the nobility to set a good example to the lower classes, and he feels called upon to write articles censuring the upper classes for not being conscious of this duty. He believes that the problem extends back to the time of the Restoration. Herbert T. Webster states:

> Several eighteenth-century commentators, among them Defoe, trace the epidemic of eighteenth-century crime to increased laxity of morals in the time of Charles II.[90]

Defoe shows this attitude in his writings. When he wants Roxana to be put in the worst possible circumstances, he selects the court of Charles II, although this causes a discrepancy in the time of the story.

The only character in his novels who moves with

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[89] Girdler, op. cit., p. 35.

[90] Webster, op. cit., p. 111.

royalty is Roxana. Certainly few girls reading the life of Roxana would be envious of her life as a wealthy courtesan. Defoe often exaggerates situations to prove a point, but the court life of the time of Charles II did carry pleasure to an extreme. Walter Wilson writes of Roxana as follows:

> She is just such a sort of person as may be supposed to have figured in the gay and licentious days of Charles II; when a thorough-bred loyalist, whether in court or city, would have thought it a breach of good manners to be considered better than his prince.[91]

The life may have appeared to the lower classes to be a joyful one, but in truth, the surfeit of pleasure produces a life of unrelieved boredom for such persons as Roxana. In order to find new pleasures, the upper classes permit moral standards to decline considerably until their standards are no better than those of the lowest elements of society. In spite of their low moral standards, the rich do not usually take part in criminal actions. Those who do go outside the law do not do so because of necessity, as the poor do, but because of greed or desire to gratify some vice. According to Puritan belief, if a rich man loses his money and falls to ruin, the only possible reason for the fall can be an ungodly life. Therefore, the rich

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[91] Walter Wilson, Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel Defoe (London: Hurst, Chance, and Company, 1830), III, 530.

man who falls into ruin has already been doing wrong, and new deeds as a criminal must be considered as a mere extension of his previous bad life.

When a rich man loses his money, he might go to work as a common laborer, but this degradation is considered to be the worst of all possible fates. It is more acceptable to become a criminal. In romantic tradition the highwayman (considered to be the highest class of criminal) is a ruined nobleman. When Jemmy discovers that Moll Flanders has tricked him and that they are penniless, he becomes a highwayman. As a highwayman he must work alone or with a small band of accomplices and must avoid his former friends. He might rob his old acquaintances but that is dangerous because he is sure to be recognized. There is usually a price on his head. He can trust no one because even his followers or his friends might report him to the law for the reward.

The highwayman still traditionally maintains his elegant costume and expensive way of living from his earlier station. There is a great deal of admiration from the general public for his exploits and glamorous way of living. Although the public supposedly is against crime, the people actually envy the success of the "land pirate" of romantic fiction.

A person is admired more for becoming a highwayman

than for being a member of the lowest class of non-criminal society--the servant class. The servants in Defoe's novels are all rather like well-trained dogs that come when called and disappear when they are not needed. Lew Girdler comments upon the status of the servant and applies his remarks to Crusoe's servant Friday as follows:

> Though Defoe does not explicitly say so, I believe that he thought the ideal master-servant relationship to be one based upon benevolent paternalism in the master and grateful devotion in the servant. Although Crusoe was no gentleman, his treatment of Friday seems to represent Defoe's idea of the best method to use in handling a servant.[92]

The ideal servant recognizes the obvious superiority of his master and is grateful for being allowed to serve such a person. Defoe has Crusoe say concerning Friday:

> For never man had a more faithful, loving, sincere servant than Friday was to me; without passions, sullenness, or designs, perfectly obliged and engaged; his very affections were tied to me, like those of a child to a father; and I dare say he would have sacrificed his life for the saving mine upon any occasion whatsoever.[93]

All of Defoe's servants except two are paragons of servility. The two exceptions are Moll Flanders, who insists that she is going to rise above her station, and Amy, who may or may not be the perfect servant. When Moll

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[92]Girdler, op. cit., p. 348.

[93]Robinson Crusoe, p. 205.

is a young girl of eight years she says, "I had a thorough aversion to going to service, as they called it (that is, to be a servant), though I was so young."[94] She insists that she will become a gentlewoman and is thoroughly ridiculed by the adults for her grandiose notion. When she becomes an adult, she, like her husband Jemmy, prefers being a criminal to being a servant.

Amy, Roxana's maid, is a controversial character. The question is whether Amy advises Roxana to lead an unvirtuous life, or whether it is the other way around. Roxana says at the beginning of the book:

> I must remember it here, to the Praise of this poor Girl, my Maid, that tho' I was not able to give her any Wages, and had told her so, nay I was not able to pay her the Wages that I was in Arrears to her, yet she would not leave me; nay, and as long as she had any Money, when I had none, she would help me out of her own; for which, tho' I acknowleg'd [sic] her Kindness and Fidelity, yet it was but a bad Coin that she was paid in at last, as will appear in its Place.[95]

However, the advice to begin some new love affair usually comes from Amy. The advice seems to be based on expediency rather than on moral standards. Amy serves as messenger and intermediary in difficult situations. Part of the time Roxana addresses Amy as "slut," "jade," or "whore."

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[94] Moll Flanders, p. 4.

[95] Roxana, p. 16.

Spiro Peterson says:

> Amy must be recognized as one of Defoe's diabolic characters....It is the "familiar" Amy who first poses before Roxana the two devils, the apparent devil of poverty and rags and the real devil of sin.[96]

The concept of Amy as perfect servant seems to be very much in keeping with Defoe's theory of gentility. The idea that a mere servant would have great influence on a person of a higher station does not seem likely. It is Roxana who talks Amy into letting herself be seduced. Roxana should be setting the good example, but she is doing the opposite. In this instance, Amy does not fit the pattern of the silent, obedient servant in the background.

One of the most important requirements for a servant is that he must recognize his inferiority and "know his place." Paul Dottin relates an account of a real-life blunder made by Defoe:

> One can imagine, then, his embarrassment when, one day, upon entering a room full of ladies, he embraced them all, as was the custom, and discovered, to his chagrin, that he had included a waiting-woman, whose dress, as fine as her mistress's had led him into error....He took out his fury by writing a severe reprimand addressed to servants who so far forgot their place as to mimic their betters in matters of dress. De Foe was always conscious of class distinctions.[97]

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[96] Peterson, op. cit., p. 24.

[97] Dottin, op. cit., pp. 228-229.

Defoe knew that his novels would be read by many young servant girls, and he wanted to impress upon them their duty to be industrious servants of good moral character.

Defoe said that one should know his place and be content to stay there, but, in practice, he was a notorious social climber. He constantly tried to curry favor with the aristocrats and worked desperately for the right to add the title "Gentleman" to his name. He often went into debt to purchase expensive clothes and goods which would make a fine display.

His main characters also try to climb socially. Moll Flanders purchases fine clothes to make Jemmy think that she is rich. Roxana uses her finery to advance herself socially. It seems that it is acceptable for the central characters (who are really extensions of Defoe) to rise, but it is not right for servants to want to get ahead.

Even in the criminal world, Moll strives to rise. Her reputation is that of a competent thief who is clever enough not to get caught. She is admired by other less successful criminals and stands at the top of her social criminal class. In order to go higher, she has to go above the criminal class and rise to the middle class world. But even when Moll is at the top of her criminal class, she has very little to do with other criminals. She cannot trust companions and runs into disaster the one time that

she decides to work with others. This lack of companions is in contrast to Roxana's position when she becomes a society leader. Roxana is surrounded by dozens of people at parties and entertainments. Their differences in circumstances show the essential distinction between the social worlds of legality and illegality.

II. FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Defoe relies mainly on Roxana to present his ideas on family relationships. It is Roxana who goes into considerable detail concerning the smallest social unit--the family. Defoe's beliefs about marriage are most often found in Roxana's discussions with her lovers or with Amy. Neither Crusoe nor Captain Singleton marries or has anything to say about marriage. Moll Flanders has a series of husbands, legal and otherwise, but she does not philosophize much about marriage as an institution. Roxana spends a large part of her time discussing her views of marriage.

Both Moll and Roxana believe that marriage is a business transaction, not a love affair. The only hint of sentiment in marriage is Moll's "second" marriage to Jemmy in the later years. Moll says that she "divorces" her husbands, but she never obtains a legal divorce. It was commonly, but erroneously, believed by the general population that a separation by mutual consent was a legal divorce.

This type of separation did have the force of law, but only if neither party remarried or there was no disagreement over property settlement. In spite of this proscription against remarriage, the common people continued to use "mutual separation" as a sort of "poor man's divorce," and they would remarry anyway. Peterson explains the general attitude when he states:

> Until the early eighteenth century divorce had been an expensive privilege reserved to the upper classes. When a "citizen" first won a parliamentary divorce in 1701, it did look as if middle class society had usurped a genteel fashion.[98]

Moll tries to convince herself that her separations are legal divorces, but she actually knows better. Peterson points out:

> Later, when she has not heard from the Linnen-Draper for almost fifteen years and has celebrated other illegal marriages, she admits a matrimonial obligation only to her first husband if he yet lived.[99]

Therefore, legally Moll has only one husband throughout her career. The "marriage" to her brother is illegal according to ecclesiastical as well as civil law. Such a relationship is forbidden as a "marriage of consanguinity within the Levitical degree." The reconciliation at the end of the story with Jemmy instead of one of her other

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[98] Peterson, op. cit., p. 160.

[99] Ibid., p. 18.

"husbands" is the only ending possible if the story is to present a reformed Moll in good moral and legal standing.

Roxana shows that the marriage attitudes of the upper classes are not much different from those of the lower classes. It is the middle class which disapproves of illicit affairs and emphasizes the sanctity of the home. Roxana has as many affairs as Moll has--perhaps more. The difference is that after Roxana becomes rich, she no longer has an economic reason for selling her favors, but continues to do it anyway because she wants to. The pursuit of pleasure is considered to be a virtue among the upper classes, and little censure is given for following the example set by the Merry Monarch (Charles II) and his court.

The unusual thing about the novel Roxana is the advanced feminist viewpoint of the main character. Defoe wrote editorials advocating better education for women and equal status before the law. He urged that they be given more opportunities in the business world, with adequate salaries so that they would not have to turn to prostitution if they had no husband or family to support them. His views on feminism were far ahead of his time, and some of them are still ahead of our time.

Roxana makes a bad marriage to a "fool husband." He spends all of his money and hers too, then deserts her

and their five children. After that experience Roxana is always careful to see that she is going to gain financially before she consents to any arrangement. She married him because he was a "handsome, jolly Fellow" but soon learned the lesson that appearances can deceive. Defoe devotes five pages of the book to describing and castigating the Fool in language resembling Biblical condemnations. Peterson even pinpoints the place in the Bible when he says, "Defoe was indebted to Solomon's Proverbs, for language and concept, in drawing the social ineptitude of the Fool husband."[100] The Biblical style is evident in Roxana's first direct address to the readers:

> Never, Ladies, marry a Fool; any Husband rather than a Fool; with some other Husbands you may be unhappy, but with a Fool you will be miserable; with another Husband you may, I say, be unhappy, but with a Fool you must; nay, if he wou'd, he cannot make you easie; every thing he does is so awkward, every thing he says is so empty, a Woman of any Sence cannot but be surfeited, and sick of him twenty times a-Day: What is more shocking, than for a Woman to bring a handsome, comely Fellow of a Husband, into Company, and then be oblig'd to Blush for him every time she hears him speak? To hear other Gentlemen talk Sence, and he able to say nothing? And so look like a Fool, or, which is worse, hear him talk Nonsence, and be laugh'd at for a Fool.[101]

The passage begins with the simple commandment--never

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[100] Ibid., p. 14.

[101] Roxana, p. 8.

marry a fool. Then comes a series of reasons in parallel phrases beginning "with" or "but with." Then there are two rhetorical questions in Biblical style. The final sentence is not really a sentence, but is the last part of the question written as a statement.

After Roxana is deserted by her Fool husband, she has a series of romantic affairs and finally finds a man who loves her and begs her to marry him, but she--astonishingly--refuses. She is expecting his child, but even that fact does not make her change her mind. She prefers to remain independent. Roxana states:

> The Upshot of all this was, to recommend to me, rather the bestowing my Fortune upon some eminent Merchant, who...wou'd at the first word, settle all my Fortune on myself and Children, and maintain me like a Queen.
>
> This was certainly right; and had I taken his Advice, I had been really happy; but my Heart was bent upon an Independency of Fortune; and I told him, I knew no State of Matrimony, but what was, at best, a State of Inferiority, if not of Bondage; that I had no Notion of it; that I liv'd a Life of absolute Liberty now; was free as I was born, and having a plentiful Fortune, I did not understand what Coherence the Words Honour and Obey had with the Liberty of a Free Woman...and seeing Liberty seem'd to be the Men's Property, I wou'd be a Man-Woman; for as I was born free, I wou'd die so.[102]

Roxana does not like the law which states that a married woman's property belongs to her husband. She lost her original property because her Fool husband squandered it,

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[102] Ibid., pp. 170-171.

and there was nothing she could do to stop him.

Roxana's statement that she will be a "Man-Woman" marks her as being a most unusual eighteenth-century heroine. The idea that a woman should have the right to be independent is an idea not expressed so forcefully again in literature until Nora in Ibsen's A Doll's House walks out on her husband and slams the door. Roxana's views are certainly not typical of her class nor of her time.

Roxana refuses to marry the merchant and give their child a name. The merchant is shocked by her refusal and says to her:

> But I have been surpriz'd with such a Denial, that no Woman in such Circumstances ever gave to a Man; for certainly it was never known, that any Woman refus'd to marry a Man that had first lain with her, much less a Man that had gotten her with-Child; but you go upon different Notions from all the World; and tho' you reason upon it so strongly, that a Man knows hardly what to answer, yet I must own, there is something in it shocking to Nature, and something very unkind to yourself; but above all, it is unkind to the Child that is yet unborn; who, if we marry, will come into the World with Advantage enough, but if not, is ruin'd before it is born; must bear the eternal Reproach of what it is not guilty of; must be branded from its Cradle with a Mark of Infamy; be loaded with the Crimes and Follies of its Parents, and suffer for Sins that it never committed.[103]

Roxana does not care whether the child has a name or not because she will soon give it to somebody else to care for anyway.

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[103] Ibid., p. 156.

The main difference in marriage viewpoints expressed in the novels Moll Flanders and Roxana is that Moll eventually always finds a man to provide for her and settles happily into some sort of temporary marriage, but Roxana chooses to have affairs and not to marry, even though she has excellent opportunities, because she prefers to be financially independent. These two books together give a rather complete picture of the problems involved in marriage as a legal institution or business. Peterson states:

> Moll Flanders and The Fortunate Mistress [Roxana] are essentially companion studies in the domestic relation. They present, in the irregular marriages and outright adulteries, major aberrations from the norms of the class to which they were directed.[104]

That one person would take part in so many marriages and affairs seems to be the only "aberration" from the norm evident from accounts of the time concerning the criminal classes and the licentious atmosphere of the court. There was nothing abnormal in a sexual sense about any of their affairs. The same sort of conduct was also going on among the middle class citizens, but they hypocritically tried to pretend that it was not.

The attitude toward marriage expressed in Moll Flanders and Roxana is certainly not that of the "lived-

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[104] Spiro Peterson, "The Matrimonial Theme of Defoe's Roxana," Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, LXX (March, 1955), 167.

happily-ever-after" marriage of most fiction. Defoe's own marriage was apparently not the type advocated by the officials of his church. He and his wife did not get along well. He was frequently absent for long periods, leaving her to rear the children. Samuel Tuffley, Defoe's brother-in-law, left his estate to Defoe's wife with the proviso that she was to have the disposing of it "absolutely and independently of her said husband Daniel Defoe." Sutherland gives further details of the trouble in the Defoe family as follows:

> Tuffley, however, went further, and made an even more significant request. If his sister were to leave any of her inheritance to her children, she was to consider how far each of them deserved to be remembered by her....His words are so positive that one can hardly help suspecting that already by the year 1714 there had been trouble in the Defoe family between father and child.[105]

In all of Defoe's novels there is no pleasant domestic scene. The nearest approach to a home-like scene is that of Crusoe sitting down to dinner surrounded by his animals. Although Moll and Roxana love their children after a fashion, they do not provide a decent home for them except at brief intervals. Even then Defoe does not give any description of home life. The children remain shadowy figures flitting through the pages. Only Susan in Roxana begins to have any real existence. She

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[105] Sutherland, op. cit., pp. 256-257.

longs for a mother, but Roxana rejects her in order to protect her own social position. Reputation to Roxana means more than family ties.

The only character who has any home life at all is Crusoe before he leaves his country. However, no details are given of this period of life up to the time of the argument with his father and the subsequent going to sea. The home life may have been unhappy, but the reader is not told what the situation has been.

Thus it seems evident that the family as a social institution in Defoe's novels is almost non-existent. Family members feel little obligation to each other. The families in the novels are greatly disoriented. Children are sent off to relatives, institutions, or "baby farmers" whenever they inconvenience the mother. It is significant that Moll and Roxana account strictly for time and money, but they are so casual about their children that it is difficult to determine just how many children they have. They are not held accountable for such things. As was pointed out in a previous chapter, Roxana refers to a child as "it" rather than by name. Their marriages are entered into for financial advantage and broken by simply walking off. There may be momentary regret, but there is no psychological damage or soul-searching agony to find the causes for the failure of the marriage.

The family members are not involved psychologically. Roxana refuses to marry the merchant although he urges her to marry him for the sake of the child; but she does not care about the unborn child. The merchant does have a feeling of compassion for the child, but its mother does not. Roxana is concerned only with her personal crusade for independence for women.

Crusoe shows a lack of family feeling when he refuses to obey his father's wishes and goes to sea. Crusoe does recognize the fact that it is a sin not to "Honor thy father," but he defies him anyway. Crusoe frequently mentions in later statements that all of his trouble stems from that first sin. He is the only one of the four main characters to regret the action that breaks up his relationship with his parents. He calls his animals his "family," but never again participates in the home life of a real family. After his rescue he goes back to his sister's house but soon realizes that he does not belong in that family group.

Several of the minor characters in Defoe's novels take in children, support them, and love them, but the important characters do not. All of them are as alienated from their families as they are from the rest of the world. There is no comfortable and secure home to which they can

turn when the pressures of the outside world are too great for them, and they make only sporadic attempts to create homes. They prefer to remain as isolated persons.

III. FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES

Friends and business acquaintances are exploited chiefly for the selfish purposes of the main characters. The only attempt at genuine friendship might be that of Singleton and William the Quaker. All other cases of close relationship over a period of time involve either marriage partners or persons of unequal social class. Moll's "governess" might possibly be considered as a friend, but her motives are suspect because she benefits financially from her relationship with Moll by selling the stolen goods Moll brings in. Several characters become involved briefly as possible friends, but they disappear when they are no longer useful to the main character.

It is dangerous for Moll and Singleton to have many acquaintances because the thieves are involved in illegal activities and cannot risk being exposed to the authorities. Moll says:

> I had now practised upwards of five years, and the people at Newgate did not so much as know me; they had heard much of me indeed, and often expected me there, but I always got off though many times in the extremest danger.
>
> One of the greatest dangers I was now in, was that I was too well known among the trade, and some

> of them whose hatred was owing rather to envy than any injury I had done them, began to be angry that I should always escape when they were always catched and hurried to Newgate. These were they that gave me the name of Moll Flanders.[106]

Moll is being very prudent, and well she should be, because a short time later her young partner in crime is caught and tries to betray her in order to save himself from a harsh sentence. She has been posing as a man named Gabriel Spencer and only giving up this disguise and going back to appearing as a woman saves her from being detected and sent to prison.

Roxana has no real friends. Amy is her servant, and the Quaker woman at the end of the story is Roxana's landlady. Roxana calls the Quaker her friend, but she does not trust her. She says:

> I must put in a Caution however, here, that you must not understand me as if I let my Friend the QUAKER into any Part of the Secret History of my former Life; nor did I commit the Grand reserv'd Article of all, to her, viz. That I was really the Girl's Mother, and the Lady Roxana; there was no need of that Part being expos'd; and it was always a Maxim with me, That Secrets shou'd never be open'd, without evident Utility.[107]

There is considerable debate over whether the characterization of the Quaker is supposed to be sympathetic or

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[106] Moll Flanders, pp. 202-203.

[107] Roxana, p. 326.

derogatory.[108] William the Quaker in Captain Singleton must be regarded in the same light as the Quaker woman in Roxana. They are either good friends of the main characters or hypocrites pretending to be friends in order to gain financial advantage. Both Roxana and Singleton are so suspicious of the motives of others that they might be seeing mistrust where it does not exist. At any rate the main characters do not trust the Quakers, and so they cannot become friends with them in the strict sense of the word.

Crusoe does not make any genuine or permanent friends before, during, or after his island adventure. One might think that Crusoe would be eager to have friends after being long deprived of companionship, but he is not. Alan Dugald McKillop says:

> On or off the island, other characters count only as they help or hinder Crusoe. In Part I we have the good boy Xury, the famous Friday himself, and the Portuguese captain who manages Crusoe's Brazilian estates faithfully. But his obligations to the helpers do not go deep. Such timely aid is like finding money, but Defoe does not build upon it a world of comradeship and love. Robinson's experiences of himself and others do not transform his later career. The most notable example of the helper is of course Friday, and Dickens could never forgive Defoe for burying him without a fitting tribute.

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[108] Defoe's attitude toward Quakers will be discussed more fully in the following chapter.

> Sheer utilitarianism can be in its way as offensive as the later excesses of sentimentalism.[109]

There is no need for Crusoe to avoid people because he is not in trouble with the law and has nothing to fear from people. Crusoe holds himself aloof entirely by choice.

The problems Defoe himself had in finding it necessary to hide from acquaintances in order to stay out of prison may have given him the distrustful attitude toward other people. Ezra Kempton Maxfield states, "One must be blind indeed to read any friendliness whatsoever into any writing of Defoe's after 1708 [after he was in the pillory]."[110] This statement is perhaps a little extreme, but is certainly true as a general statement of Defoe's treatment of friendship.

IV. TREATMENT OF FOREIGNERS

Another type of relationship which exists in the novels is that of the Englishman with the foreigner. Defoe reflects the typical British attitude of the time that native Britons were naturally superior to others. The inhabitants of countries where non-Christian religions predominate are treated as worthy only of contempt. Those

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[109] McKillop, op. cit., pp. 24-25.

[110] Ezra Kempton Maxfield, "Daniel Defoe and the Quakers," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XLVII (March, 1932), 181.

from Catholic countries are generally (but not always) the subjects of derision also. The Portuguese in particular are disparaged. Singleton makes many vicious statements about the Portuguese. A typical remark is as follows:

> I had indeed nothing to do, my Master being generally on Shore, but to learn every thing that is wicked among the Portuguese, a Nation the most perfidious and the most debauch'd, the most insolent and cruel, of any that pretend to call themselves Christians, in the World.[111]

Other countries and cultures are expected to defer to the superior customs of England whenever the two meet. No Englishman would think of learning the language of a native tribe; the native must learn English so that he will make a better servant. Non-whites are fit only to be servants. Even kings and princes of native tribes are treated like hired servants. Singleton says of the African Prince:

> We carried our new Prince into it, and help'd him over the Side, because of his Lameness. We made signs to him, that his Men must carry our Goods for us, and shewed him what we had; he answer'd Ce Seignior, or Yes Sir, (for we had taught him that Word, and the Meaning of it) and taking up a Bundle, he made Signs to us, that when his Arm was well, he would carry some for us.[112]

When Crusoe is left alone in a primitive world, it would seem natural that he would become half savage (as

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[111] Captain Singleton, p. 7.

[112] Ibid., p. 73.

had all of the real-life castaways.) Maximillian E. Novak discusses the subject of Crusoe and the savage at length in Defoe and the Nature of Man. He points out:

> Instead of reverting to the life of a savage, Crusoe remakes the paradigm of the noble savage into a civilized man.[113]

Crusoe might have learned from Friday some tricks of survival in a strange land, but because of his "natural superiority" he has already surpassed the civilization of the natives by the time he finds him. Friday contributes absolutely nothing to Crusoe's knowledge. His sole function is to serve as Crusoe's perfectly trained servant.

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[113]Maximillian E. Novak, Defoe and the Nature of Man (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 38.

CHAPTER V

RELIGIOUS ISOLATION

I. THE PROBLEM OF SINCERITY

The important problem to be solved concerning religion in the novels is the question of Defoe's religious sincerity. One might well ask these questions: Are the moralizing speeches in his books really intended to imbue the reader with religious fervor, or are they there to make the book acceptable to censors who would otherwise forbid the reading of the book? Is Defoe to be regarded as a blatant hypocrite or simply as a sinner whose deeds fell short of his noble intentions? Is he being intentionally ironical? Is the biographical element trustworthy?

In most novels the religious belief of the author is of no particular importance, but because Defoe put himself so definitely into his main characters, the question of his religious belief is a valid one.

The problem of Defoe's sincerity has plagued critics since the novels were first considered to be worth reviewing (in the early nineteenth century). Most of the nineteenth-century critics agree with William Hazlitt who states:

> De Foe uniformly pays homage to virtue; and when he dives into the depravity of the human character, it is for the purpose of raising it to the standard of excellence.[114]

Some, however, take the opposite view. One of the critics of the nineteenth century who held a different view was Leslie Stephen who refutes Hazlitt's statement in this manner:

> Some of his simple-minded commentators have even given him credit, upon the strength of such passages, for lofty moral purpose. They fancy that his lives of criminals, real or imaginary, were intended to be tracts showing that vice leads to the gallows. No doubt, De Foe had the same kind of solid homespun morality as Hogarth, for example, which was not in its way a bad thing. But one need not be very cynical to believe that his real object in writing such books was to produce something that would sell, and that in the main he was neither more nor less moral than the last newspaper writer who has told us the story of a sensational murder.[115]

There is also considerable discussion of whether the stories are designed to be parables illustrating moral truths or whether the element of religion is deliberately put in to make moralists happy. Walter Wilson supports the former suggestion when he says:

> The reader of Crusoe is taught to be a religious, whilst he is an animal being. But his lessons of this kind are no where out of place; they are closely interwoven with the story, and are so just

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[114] William Hazlitt, "The Life of De Foe" in Daniel De Foe, The Works of Daniel De Foe (London: John Clements, 1840), I, cviii.

[115] Stephen, op. cit., p. 60.

> and pertinent in themselves, that they cannot be passed over, but the attention is irresistibly rivetted to them as an essential part of the narrative.[116]

Brian Fitzgerald, writing one hundred twenty-five years later than Wilson, takes the opposite view as he says:

> Defoe's Puritan conscience, of course, forces him to tag on a moral reflection every so often; but the briskness of the story casts the thing away like an unwanted garment.[117]

The question that must be asked of the preceding statement is whether the moral statements are or are not "unwanted" by the readers. The Puritans enjoyed reading sermons and other religious works and liked moralizing in written work.

The fact that the religious statements seem to some readers to be hypocritical may arise from a different set of beliefs between themselves and Defoe. What to one sect seems a logical distinction between a sinful and a moral act appears to another sect to be silly or hypocritical. Defoe may very possibly be following a different set of rules from the reader.

The answer to the problem of sincerity as it affects the novels is best given by E. M. W. Tillyard who states:

> Whether Defoe shared the religious emotions and beliefs of his fellow Protestants has been disputed. There is a good deal of piety in his works; but was

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[116] Wilson, op. cit., pp. 442-443.

[117] Fitzgerald, op. cit., p. 192.

> it sincere? I need not enter this dispute, for, whether he was personally sincere or no, he knew and understood the type of piety in question very thoroughly and had an imaginative sympathy with it sufficient for the purposes of his art. This is no light matter, for it especially concerns Robinson Crusoe, whose piety is woven into the whole texture of the book. If Defoe merely assumed piety for the sake of popularity, if it was not an organic part of himself, the quality of the whole book must suffer. But bred as he was in the very cradle of English dissent, how could Defoe have avoided getting the gist of it into his system?....To sum up and repeat: what Defoe thought of the Puritan religion is secondary; what matters, and what assures his artistic sincerity, is that he had it in his bones.[118]

II. THE PURITAN ETHIC

The Puritan religion emphasizes that a person elected to go to heaven would live a holy life based on service to God. The believer must discipline himself to eliminate sinful influences and follow God's will. All forms of Puritanism share these basic beliefs, but beyond them there are many variations of interpretation.

The Dissenters of eighteenth-century England included some of the principles of capitalism as part of their religious tenets. Work for a secular master became work for God also. The virtues of the business world became the virtues of religion. The conflict came when the commercial world demanded tactics that were not in keeping with the religion. The person must either give up his business or

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[118] Tillyard, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

find a way to rationalize what he was doing to make it religiously acceptable. Martin Price comments on this conflict as found in Defoe's works when he says:

> Running through this compound is the troubled conscience of a Puritan tradesman, aware of the frequent conflict between the demands of commercial gain and those of spiritual salvation. It is this troubled conscience that gives his characters their depth. They are tremendously efficient and resourceful in meeting the difficulties of their "trade," and Defoe catches the excitement of their limited but genuine art. But they are also nagged by doubt and a sense of guilt, by an awareness of what they have ignored or put by in their single-minded commitment. These pangs are not, in most cases, very effectual, but they are none the less authentic.[119]

The Puritan belief in work dominates Defoe's novels; his characters are some of the busiest in all fiction. When Crusoe is on the island, he rests only on Sunday. The other six days he is busy building more houses and fences than he really needs, cultivating crops, or building boats. When Friday comes to join him, he does not relax and let his servant do the work--he is glad of another worker so that they can accomplish more. He does not ask Friday to help him; he simply makes a slave of him and issues orders to him.

Because of legal technicalities neither Roxana nor Moll is eligible for charity money from the parish and is

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[119]Price, op. cit., p. 263.

forced to go into prostitution in order to live. They also consider it better to work at an illegal profession than to collect public charity. From their viewpoint, any job is better than none. Defoe was opposed to the idea of public charity for adults because it encouraged vice and laziness. Dorothy Marshall comments on Defoe's attitude toward public welfare programs as follows:

> Defoe declared roundly that in his day no man need be poor merely for want of wages, and that what was wanted was to see that the poor worked rather than to give them alms.[120]

Since Defoe was an employer interested in cheap labor, it might be assumed that his motives were not based entirely on compassion for the poor.

One quality lacking in most of Defoe's characters is a feeling of compassion for those who are victimized by the main characters. They abandon others to arrest, starvation, or unknown fates without a scruple. Crusoe sells Xury to the Portuguese captain for sixty pieces of eight in order to gain his own freedom. Moll Flanders abandons her partner when he asks her to help him avoid being arrested and sent to prison. When she is in prison herself, her governess smuggles some money to her for bribing the jailer, but Moll does not return the favor for

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[120] Marshall, op. cit., p. 65.

any of her partners--she avoids them. For Moll and Crusoe the Golden Rule apparently works in only one direction. They take from others, but they do not often give in return. Moll does, however, nurse a sick man and share her goods with Jemmy when they go to the New World.

When Moll avoids her former partner, she is, however, obeying a different rule of Puritanism--prudence. To send money to a partner might jeopardize her security if she were found out. It is not wise to let everyone know what is going on or what one's fortunes are. Even in telling her story, Moll does not give her real name because she might be recognized. She often conceals money from her husbands so that when they leave her she will still have something to live on. Moll continues to conceal things even when there seems to be no longer a need to be careful. Prudence has become a habit. Moll believes that God helps those who prudently help themselves.

Crusoe realizes that he must help himself to work out his own salvation after he sins and is consequently shipwrecked as punishment. God will provide the guidance, but it is up to man to search actively for the right way to live. Crusoe looks for answers to his problems in the Bible and finds them. He gets the opportunity to share his happiness in his newly-strengthened faith when Friday arrives. Crusoe immediately begins to convert him. Paul

Dottin suggests a reason for his missionary work when he says:

> He turned to the Bible for an answer to every difficulty and set to work at once to convert Friday to Protestantism. By this missionary work and by his continued submission to the Will of the Lord, he confidently expected to atone for his past faults....It is as though he had struck a bargain with the Almighty.[121]

Crusoe has to atone for his great sin in disobeying his father's wishes. After the first great storm at sea, Defoe has Crusoe state:

> I began now seriously to reflect upon what I had done, and how justly I was overtaken by the judgment of Heaven for my wicked leaving my father's house and abandoning my duty; all the good counsel of my parents, my father's tears, and my mother's entreaties came now fresh into my mind, and my conscience, which was not yet come to the pitch of hardness to which it has been since, reproached me with the contempt of advice and the breach of my duty to God and my father.[122]

However, Crusoe is not sufficiently impressed by the warning of the storm at sea and goes back to the ship. Because of his failure to pay attention to the warning, he is then shipwrecked. Maximillian E. Novak points out that the reason for Crusoe's failure to respect his father's wishes is found in personal qualities that are the opposite of Puritan virtues as he states:

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[121]Dottin, op. cit., p. 210. Nothing is omitted; the dots are in the original statement.

[122]Robinson Crusoe, p. 12.

> I want to suggest that Crusoe's sin is his refusal to follow the "calling" chosen for him by his father and that the rationale for this action can be found in Crusoe's personal characteristics: his lack of economic prudence, his inability to follow a steady profession, his indifference to a calm bourgeois life, and his love of travel.[123]

Crusoe's lack of prudence and inability to follow a profession are symptoms of disharmony with God. Disobeying his father is a way of breaking the fifth commandment.

Moll's "original sin" is not so clearly indicated as is Crusoe's. It is generally assumed that the seduction by the older brother is her first sin, but G. A. Starr argues that vanity, not adultery, is Moll's shortcoming:

> At all events, Defoe takes care to indicate that it is vanity rather than love or lust which animates her at the beginning. Although in the course of time she does become passionately attached to the elder brother, this does not seem to be a factor in her initial seduction. When the elder brother's declaration of love "fired her blood," it is her vanity which is enflamed.[124]

Vanity, however, must be distinguished from thinking well of oneself. As a young girl, Moll is naturally flattered by the brother's attentions and foolishly submits. But "vanity" suggests an excess of attention to one's person, and Moll does not seem to be interested in fine clothes

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[123] Maximillian E. Novak, "Robinson Crusoe's 'Original Sin'," Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, I (Summer, 1961), 19.

[124] G. A. Starr, Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 130.

or personal adornment for vain reasons. She uses clothes for business reasons--capturing husbands, disguising herself--but even when she has money, she does not spend it on fancy clothing or jewels. Her concern about her personal appearance is no more than that of the average woman. In looking back, Moll may choose to rationalize her doings by blaming her sin of adultery on the lesser sin of vanity. The sin committed most often by Moll is adultery. This is the sin for which she must atone. Her redemption comes when she is in prison and is reunited with her legal husband. After she comes out of prison, she no longer practices her sinful profession and becomes a good wife, although she keeps the money earned from her previous activities as a means of support. Robert Alter comments on Moll's wealth as follows:

> The tough-minded honesty that made her insist on the appellation "whore" when she deserved it all but evaporates after Moll and her Lancastershire husband settle in America with a stock of capital accumulated from prostitution, shoplifting, housebreaking, pickpocketing, and armed robbery on the road. Her perfunctory twinge of conscience over the source of the wealth is quickly overcome by the sense of well-being in finally setting up a comfortable, respectable, and dependably profitable establishment.
>
> The fact is that Moll is not nearly so witheringly honest with herself as some of her moments of frankness might lead one to conclude.[125]

Moll does not give up her ill-gotten goods because it would

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[125]Robert Alter, Rogue's Progress (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 37-38.

not be prudent to give them away and be left with nothing. To gain salvation it was not necessary for the eighteenth-century (and later) Puritans to "sell all thou hast and give to the poor." Ian Watt comments upon the Puritan attitude toward poverty when he says:

> In the Middle Ages the examples of Christ and St. Francis gave sanction to the view that poverty, far from being a disgrace, might well enhance the individual's prospects of salvation. In the sixteenth century, however, as a result of a new emphasis on economic achievement, the opposite viewpoint came to be widely accepted: indigence was both shameful in itself and presumptive evidence of present wickedness and future damnation. This view is shared by Defoe's heroes; they would rather steal than beg, and they would lose their own self-respect--and the reader's--if they did not exhibit this characteristic hubris of economic man.[126]

Moll's spoils from her robberies demonstrate that Moll has not been idle. She has acquired a considerable amount of security. One Puritan tenet would require that Moll give back what she has stolen, but she chooses to follow the other tenet on being prudent, which means keeping her goods for security. When Moll begins her career, she defends herself on the grounds of "Necessity," but as she acquires a store of wealth, she has to find a new excuse and chooses "Prudence."

Roxana's "original sin" is imprudence in marrying a "fool husband." The Bible contains many warnings against fools, but Roxana does not read them and subsequently

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[126] Watt, op. cit., p. 95.

suffers because of her lack of knowledge.

Singleton violates the commandment against stealing by taking a small amount of money from the ship captain. This small sin enlarges into a career of sin until he becomes a notorious pirate who can eventually return to his home country only by wearing a disguise.

One other aspect of the novels which has bothered many critics and readers is the erotic element in Moll Flanders and Roxana. Neither of the heroines lives a virtuous life, and both freely admit it. Moll does not give any details of exactly what happens during her amorous escapades. Roxana merely hints at what happens during long periods of her life. Robert Alter points out the way Moll avoids discussing details:

> About one thing Moll's account of her career of sin is indeed almost chastely reticent. She usually manages to skirt the physical act by which she makes her way in the world with some stratagem of euphemism or circumlocution. Though this kind of genteel euphemism is a familiar convention in English criminal biographies, there is good reason to suppose that its use in Moll Flanders represents an important step toward the realistic employment of language for characterization. A strong sense of reserve about sexual matters is, as we shall see, entirely consistent with Moll's whole mental make-up.
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> But what makes this degree of reticence in Moll somewhat surprising is the contrasting brutal frankness of which she is capable.[127]

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[127] Alter, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

It is true that Moll is brutally frank about facts, but she is not candid about feelings. There is no passion involved in her experiences. The does not tell the reader what she thinks about anything except what she wants him to believe that she thought. It has frequently been said that reading Moll Flanders is like reading a police blotter. The facts are there, but the emotions are not.

Fornication is the one sexual sin that Defoe brings up in the novels. Only once does he have a character go beyond simple fornication and that is in Roxana. G. A. Starr discusses several contemporary novels with the theme used in Roxana then suggests that the story really goes back to the Bible when he says of Roxana:

> Her lineage may extend much farther back in time, to "that woman Jezebel" whose crime was not merely to live loosely herself, but "to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication." The passage from Revelation may seem very remote from the world of Roxana; however uncertain its contribution to her feminist genealogy, it does at least help to clarify her spiritual condition. Although her overt deeds are scarcely more criminal than those of Moll Flanders, there is the important difference that while Moll seeks prey, Roxana seeks proselytes. While Moll is drawn to commit sins, Roxana actively avows them; like Jezebel, Roxana is guilty not merely of fornication but of preaching and promoting it.[128]

Because the story of Roxana is not really finished, but merely has a tacked-on ending, it is difficult to judge

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[128]Starr, op. cit., p. 176.

whether Roxana might have had a complete religious conversion and have repented or what other course she might have taken. The evidence in the story as it stands may be interpreted several ways. The judgment of Roxana as a Jezebel appears to be too severe because she is not a strong enough character to be the evil woman of Biblical history. In many cases she is as much sinned against as sinner. Everyone recognizes Jezebel's iniquity, but Roxana is not in a position to have so much influence on others as Jezebel has.

It is also important to point out that frequently the moral choice to be made by the characters is not between good and evil but between two evils or two goods. Defoe realized this and frequently had his characters be forced to choose between such evils as becoming prostitutes or watching their children die of starvation. In many cases whichever they choose is going to be morally wrong. Not until they acquire a sufficient amount of money can they afford to live the moral life required for salvation.

The question of whether Defoe is hypocritical in his treatment of characters who profess a Puritan religion but who act as if they are motivated by the devil is summed up by Virginia Woolf as follows:

> The interpretation that we put on his characters might therefore well have puzzled him. We find for ourselves meanings which he was careful to disguise even from himself. Thus it comes about that we

> admire Moll Flanders far more than we blame her. Nor can we believe that Defoe had made up his mind as to the precise degree of her guilt, or was unaware that in considering the lives of the abandoned he raised many deep questions and hinted, if he did not state, answers quite at variance with his professions of belief.[129]

III. TREATMENT OF NON-PURITAN SECTS

There are only two divisions of religion in Defoe's novels--Christian and heathen. The Christian sects are treated rather like members of a family who cannot get along with each other but who unite immediately to repel an outside force. The heathen groups serve only as sub-human subjects available for conversion.

The heathen have no rights whatsoever. It is perfectly all right for Christians to make slaves of them. Xury helps Crusoe escape from bondage; then Crusoe sells Xury into slavery. When Crusoe sells Xury to the Portuguese captain known for his cruelty, Defoe has Crusoe say:

> He offered me also sixty pieces of eight more for my boy Xury, which I was loath to take, not that I was not willing to let the captain have him, but I was very loath to sell the poor boy's liberty who had assisted me so faithfully in procuring my own. However, when I let him know my reason, he owned it to be just and offered me this medium, that he would give the boy an obligation to set him free in ten years if he turned Christian.[130]

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[129] Virginia Stephen Woolf, The Common Reader: First Series (London: The Hogarth Press, 1957), pp. 127-128.

[130] Robinson Crusoe, pp. 37-38.

Xury is to have absolutely no real choice--either turn Christian or remain a slave. Crusoe does not explain what he means by "turn Christian." Is church membership the proof of being Christian, or must Xury show Christian attitudes in his dealings with others? He does not seem to consider that perhaps all he is doing is making the boy become a hypocrite in order to escape from slavery. Neither does he consider the fact that his betrayal of a friend is a most unchristian act; he is happy to have gotten sixty pieces of silver (twice the price Judas received) to spend on his next project. He sails off to Brazil smugly congratulating himself on having saved Xury from paganism.

There is absolutely no respect for any belief outside Christianity. Defoe seems to believe that any means which brings a person to declare that he is a Christian is justified. He expresses the generally accepted opinion of his time that non-Christians are heathens and are either ignorant of the truth or deliberately perverse. Their only hope for salvation is to be converted to Christianity, by force if necessary. (There are still many people today who subscribe to this belief.)

When Defoe has to defend or explain the various sects of Christianity, he has a problem. As a member of an unofficial religion he has a certain sympathy with

others outside the official church, but he does not want to be so sympathetic that he will be identified with them. He tries to write his essays and novels for the general public, not just for Dissenters. Lew Girdler comments on Defoe's attempt to write for everyone:

> Perhaps the most striking feature of Defoe's writings about the religion of the gentleman is that sectarian leanings are not stressed; Defoe actually took care to explain that some of his works are so composed as to be of use to Anglicans and dissenters alike.[131]

Defoe really believes that he is writing for Anglicans, Quakers, and Roman Catholics, as well as for Dissenters, but he does not realize how deeply his Puritan beliefs are ingrained. He gives little offense to others, but the tone of each book is obviously Puritan.

There is considerable difference of opinion about Defoe's treatment of the Quakers in his novels. He says that he is defending the members of that faith, but he makes the only two Quakers in the novels as roguish as the main characters. William in Captain Singleton and the Landlady in Roxana are both involved in the schemes and illegal activities carried on. However, years before he wrote the novels, he wrote in The Review on Tuesday, February 5, 1706, as follows:

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[131]Girdler, op. cit., p. 136.

Mr. Review Defends the Quakers

> I am not so ignorant as not to know that only a true saving faith in Christ, which faith is the gift of God, and wrought by his spirit, can entitle a man to the name of a true Christian; and if Christian be thus understood, I dare not determine where he shall or shall not be found.
>
> But then, as this is hard to be determined, charity dictates that we should judge no man; and our Savior commands it, that we be not judged, and he that thinks he standeth, take heed that he fall; and under these dictates of Scripture, I exercise a general charity in calling all those people Christians who profess to believe in Jesus.[132]

However, his characters make many comments about Quakers which are open to more than one interpretation. He has Roxana say:

> In the Morning my QUAKER-Landlady came and visited us....she treated us so handsomly, and with such an agreeable Chearfulness, as well as Plenty, as made it appear to me, that QUAKERS may, and that this QUAKER did, understand Good-Manners, as well as any-other People.[133]

The implication is that a Quaker is a low-class person who could not be expected to be socially acceptable, but that this particular person is an exception. Acceptance of individuals but not of a group seems to have been Defoe's way of coping with the problem of defending members of a sect whose tenets he could not accept.

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[132] Daniel Defoe, The Best of Defoe's "Review," ed. William L. Payne (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 211.

[133] Roxana, p. 245.

Defoe himself seems to have been personally acquainted with few Quakers. The only one mentioned as such in the biographies is Samuel Keimer, who was his printer in 1715.

One might question Defoe's reason for specifying that the characters are Quakers. It is not usual for him to state the religious affiliations of his characters. The Quakers are rogues like the rest of the characters. William's lack of true religious feeling is noted by Ezra Kempton Maxfield who says:

> We know that he was a Quaker simply because Defoe names him as such and puts a canting speech into his mouth. Like the Quakers of the eighteenth-century stage, however, William's Quakerism goes no deeper than his clothes. Defoe could as well have designated him as a Puritan or an Anglican parson, because his role is simply that of the theatrical hypocrite. At heart he is a true rogue, with no conscience or religion except as it affected the letter of his profession.[134]

William the Quaker is no better or worse than the Puritans. He is a hypocrite, but so are the other characters. William is willing to give advice on fighting, to help in the piracy, and to be a slave trader, but he does not actually touch a sword and so considers himself to be keeping the rule about not going to war. He is always making statements about religion, but his actions belie his words.

The nineteenth-century critics generally tend to the opinion that William is not a hypocrite. William Lee holds

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[134] Maxfield, op. cit., p. 189.

a much kinder view of William as a moralist:

> The Quaker pirate is the moralist of the work, and was not introduced by Defoe, as an important character, without due consideration. Few men had better studied, or more highly respected, the body of Friends, called Quakers, whose religious and moral principles were closely allied to his own; but there were undoubtedly, in the reigns of Queen Anne and George I, professed Quakers, such as we know nothing of now.[135]

William is responsible for introducing Singleton to religion. William has the function of serving as Singleton's conscience; he knows what the right way is even if he does not always act morally. The argument about the Quakers is summed up by Ernest A. Baker who states:

> Defoe's editor, Aitken, rebuked those who questioned the sincerity of the Quaker's religion and the beneficent influence which he exercised over Singleton. William is sincere enough, and Defoe had no thought of satirizing his moral attitude, though he almost seems to recognize the humour of such a comfortable identification of the interests of this world and of the next. Quaker William was a man after his own heart, and a candid embodiment of the ethics approved by himself and no doubt the majority of his readers.[136]

Defoe's attitude toward the other Christian sects is that of respect for their ideas. Some of the characters are occasionally given a disparaging remark to make, but there is often a remark of commendation later for another member of the group. This is not to be interpreted as

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[135] Lee, op. cit., p. 335.

[136] Baker, op. cit., p. 190.

meaning that he was always kind in his remarks about others. There are several snide remarks such as the one made by Captain Singleton when he says, "He made me as good a Papist as any of them in about a week's time."[137] As he is talking about cut-throat pirates, it is a wonder that it would take as long as a week to absorb the amount of true religion that they had to share; ten minutes should have been sufficient. But the character confuses learning the forms of the ceremonies with inner belief. It must also be pointed out that this incident happens before Singleton meets William and begins to learn what religion is.

Roxana assumes the trappings of another religion to suit her own purposes. She does not want to be recognized in London, and so she dresses up in Quaker fashion. She does not seem to have the slightest compunction about appearing to hold a belief to which she does not ascribe. Defoe has her say:

> By accustoming myself to converse with her, I had not only learn'd to dress like a QUAKER, but so us'd myself to THEE and THOU, that I talk'd like a QUAKER too, as readily and naturally as if I had been born among them; and, in a word, I pass'd for a QUAKER among all People that did not know me.[138]

A religious dress is to her merely a costume for concealment.

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[137] Captain Singleton, p. 10.

[138] Roxana, p. 213.

What makes her statement rather hypocritical is that earlier she has stated:

> And tho' it was strange that I, who had thus prostituted my Chastity, and given up all Sence of Virtue, in two such particular Cases, living a Life of open Adultery, should scruple any thing; yet so it was, I argued with myself, that I could not be a Cheat in any thing that was esteem'd Sacred; that I could not be of one Opinion, and then pretend myself to be of another; nor could I go to Confession, who knew nothing of the Manner of it, and should betray myself to the Priest, to be a Hugonot, and then might come into Trouble; but, In short, tho' I was a Whore, yet I was a Protestant Whore, and could not act as if I was Popish, upon any Account whatsoever.

Apparently she does not have such qualms about pretending to be a Quaker, or else she does not consider what she is doing to be cheating.

Roxana at one point regrets that she is not Catholic so that she could go to confession. However, she is also rather glad that she is not because the penance she would have to perform for her monstrous sins would have been considerable.

It is unusual to find so sympathetic a picture of the Catholic Church by a Dissenter. In the second book about Robinson Crusoe, Defoe has the French priest, a model of virtue and tolerance, point out the way to improve the island. Because of the way many of the references to any of the religions are worded, it is also possible to construe the remarks as being against the

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[139] Roxana, p. 69.

religions. Most of the remarks could be taken two ways, as in the remark about the Quakers and good manners quoted earlier. Lawrence E. Nelson believes that Defoe is entirely sympathetic to the Catholics and states:

> Meeting a ship in distress, he [Crusoe] found among the survivors a French Catholic priest, a very excellent man. For Defoe to place such a person in his tale was a fourfold affront to many Englishmen. Catholics were discriminated against; priests were detested--especially French priests. Defoe not only put such a man into his book, but made him a model of virtue and tolerance. It was not by chance that he sinned thus against English prejudices.[140]

Because Defoe himself was discriminated against for religious reasons, he had a sympathetic attitude toward other sects. He knew what it was to be persecuted for belief and wanted to make all Christian sects socially acceptable. His attitude toward others was most liberal for a Puritan and for any man in early eighteenth-century religion-conscious England.

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[140] Lawrence E. Nelson, Our Roving Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945), p. 115.

CHAPTER VI

PSYCHOLOGICAL ISOLATION

I. THE EFFECT OF ISOLATION

The startling tale of a seaman rescued from four years alone on an island in the South Sea burst upon the English public in 1712. Alexander Selkirk--soon to become the most famous real castaway in history--had been found three years earlier on January 31, 1709, by Captain Woodes Rogers, commander of a privateer called the "Duke," which stopped at the island of Más a Tierra in the Juan Fernández group four hundred miles west of Valparaiso, Chile and rescued Selkirk from his ordeal. Rogers made Selkirk the mate on his ship and two months later gave him command of one of his captured prize vessels, "The Increase," on March 29, 1709. The pirate expedition continued to ply its trade for two more years before some of the pirates decided to return to England. When Rogers returned to England, he wrote his version of the rescue in a book titled Cruising Voyage round the World (published 1712, with a second edition in 1718).

Two other important sources of information about the story of Selkirk are Edward Cooke who wrote Voyage in the South Sea and round the World (1712) and Richard Steele

who wrote an article in the Englishman (Number 26, December 3, 1713). These three reports were the ones concerning life on an island which were read by the public.

Selkirk (or Selcraig, as the name is sometimes given) was born in 1676 and died in 1721. On August 27, 1695, he was "summoned before the kirk-session for indecent behavior in church"[141] but did not appear because he had gone to sea. In 1703 as sailing master of the "Cinque Ports," he went on a privateering expedition with Captain Dampier to the Pacific Ocean. In September 1704, Selkirk quarreled with his captain, Thomas Stradling, and as a result of the dispute, he requested that he be put ashore on nearby Más a Tierra. He was given a few tools and provisions and set ashore for a period which finally became fifty-two months. Dampier, the leader of the expedition in 1704, was the pilot on Rogers' ship that rescued Selkirk. After he was rescued, he commanded "The Increase" until he returned to England on October 14, 1711. He went to his home in Largo, Fifeshire, Scotland, in 1712, but in 1717 he went to sea again. In 1721 he died while serving as master's mate on H. M. S. "Weymouth."

Defoe used several episodes from Selkirk's adventure

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[141] Encyclopaedia Britannica (1956 ed.), XX, 910.

when he wrote Robinson Crusoe. He has his main character committing a sin against God before going to sea, being alone on the island, being rescued by a passing ship, and returning to his home and then leaving again to go to sea. He used other parts of the story in writing Captain Singleton. Singleton is put on Madagascar because of a quarrel with the captain. (The difference in Singleton's case is that he is with a group of mutineers instead of being alone.) He has a small supply of tools, as Selkirk had; not a whole shipload as Crusoe has. All the details of the life of a pirate on a privateering vessel are in Captain Singleton, not in Robinson Crusoe. The locations of Selkirk's island and Singleton's are similar--the southern sea near a continent, one at the east side of the Pacific, the other at the west side of the Indian Ocean.

The facts of Selkirk's life are relatively easy to determine; the psychological effects on him of his isolation are more difficult to ascertain. The most common opinion about Selkirk's condition when he was rescued is expressed by Edward Wagenknecht who comments:

> The real-life Crusoe, Alexander Selkirk, lived alone less than four and a half years, yet he had already become more than half savage by the time he was rescued.[142]

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[142] Edward Wagenknecht, Cavalcade of the English Novel (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1954), p. 37.

Yet it seems to have taken Selkirk very little time to recover from such a state. Surely a "half-savage" would not be given the position of ship's mate immediately and a captaincy within two months. It is also true that he had traits generally called anti-social--bad behavior in church, a willingness to be a pirate, and a quarrelsome nature--before he went to the island. It might be that he was about as close to savage when he was put on the island as he was when he left it; there is no way to prove whether he was or not.

The opposite point of view from the "half-savage" existence is the romantic life on an isle as envisioned by Walter De La Mare who sees it thus:

> For eight long months Selkirk had lived in melancholy and horror, "scarce able to refrain from doing himself violence." Day after day he had sat in watch, his face towards the sea, until his eyes and the light failed him and he could watch no more....He spent his time for weeks together roaming aimlessly about his island, staring, listening, weeping, talking to himself.
>
> As time went on, however, Selkirk's spirits began to revive, as human spirits, please Heaven, are apt to revive even in the most adverse of circumstances. He vanquished his blues, he set to work, kept tally of his days, and like Orlando, cut his name in the trees. He fed plentifully on turtle until he could no more stomach it except in jellies. He built himself two huts, thatched them with grass and lined them with goatskins; the one for a kitchen, the other wherein to sleep, to read, to sing Scots psalms and to pray. Thus he became, he confessed, a better Christian than he had ever been before, or was likely to be again.[143]

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[143] De La Mare, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

The first paragraph of the above sounds reasonable, but the second seems to be largely wishful thinking stimulated by De La Mare's reading of Robinson Crusoe.

The truth about Selkirk is that he was adversely affected--although to what extent it is difficult to determine--by his sojourn on the island for fifty-two months. However, Defoe has his two island characters--Crusoe and Singleton--remain almost completely unaffected psychologically by their experiences. Crusoe is completely alone for twenty-five years before he finds Friday, but he is exactly the same man then as he was when he landed except that he has become more religious. He has managed to improve his island by planting crops and has a successful small plantation going. Ian Watt comments on the discrepancy in behavior between Selkirk and his fictional counterpart as follows:

> On the desert island Robinson Crusoe turns his forsaken estate into a triumph. This is a flagrant unreality. Other castaways in the past, including Defoe's main model, Alexander Selkirk, were reduced to an extremely primitive condition, and in the space of a few years. Harassed by fear, dogged by ecological degradation, they sank more and more to the level of animals; in some authentic cases they forgot the use of speech, went mad or died of inanition.[144]

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[144] Ian Watt, "Robinson Crusoe as a Myth," Eighteenth-Century English Literature, ed. James L. Clifford (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 167. For further reference to other castaways used by Defoe for examples see Secord, op. cit., pp. 26-28.

Defoe spent a great deal of time studying the geography of the world, the adventures of pirates and traders, and the flora and fauna of specific areas. His knowledge of the external world of his characters was extensive, but he failed to study the psychology of the castaways that he used as examples. He wrote a story that illustrated the moral principles in which he believed, not a tale that was truly authentic according to reports given by real men who had lived in long isolation. He seems, however, to have thought that he had successfully portrayed the inner life of a man stranded on an island. Instead, as Leslie Stephen points out, he merely describes the thoughts of a man in prison:

> We may infer, what is probable from other cases, that a man living fifteen years by himself, like Crusoe, would either go mad or sink into the semi-savage state. De Foe really describes a man in prison, not in solitary confinement. We should not be so pedantic as to call for accuracy in such matters; but the difference between the fiction and what we believe would have been the reality is significant. De Foe, even in Robinson Crusoe, gives a very inadequate picture of the mental torments to which his hero is exposed. He is frightened by a parrot calling him by name, and by the strangely picturesque incident of the footmark on the sand; but, on the whole, he takes his imprisonment with preternatural stolidity. His stay on the island produces the same state of mind as might be due to a dull Sunday in Scotland. For this reason, the want of power in describing emotion as compared with the amazing power of describing facts. Robinson Crusoe is a book for

> boys rather than men, and as Lamb says, for the kitchen rather than for higher circles. It falls short of any high intellectual interest.[145]

When Defoe in Moll Flanders intends to talk about the horrors of prison, he is successful because he knows what he is talking about. Moll's account of the horrors of prison and their effect on her is effective and believable where Crusoe's stolidness is not. Defoe was writing about prison from his own experience--not from what he imagined it to be. He shows Moll, a person supposedly hardened by a life of crime, disgusted by the filth, diseases, and moral depravities of her fellow inmates. She is so affected by her environment that she repents her wicked life and has such a strong religious experience that she does change her life by giving up prostitution and thieving when she leaves prison.

Defoe had a real feeling of terror when he thought of prison and would do anything to keep himself from going there. William Minto makes a rather strange statement about Defoe's possible sentence for one of his crimes when he says:

> When he wrote Robinson Crusoe, it was one of the actual chances of his life, and by no means a remote one, that he might be cast alone on an uninhabited island. We see from his letters to De la Faye how

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[145] Stephen, op. cit., p. 52.

> fearful he was of having "mistakes" laid to his charge by the Government in the course of his secret services.[146]

Defoe was afraid of being sent to prison, but the prospect of being cast away on a desert island seems rather fantastic. The records of castaways show that they were sailors put ashore in the course of a voyage, never political prisoners. English prisoners were transported, but they went to organized colonies. Minto does not give any support for his statement, and it seems more logical to assume that Defoe refers only to prison as his possible punishment. He did worry often about being imprisoned and there are many references in his letters to prisons such as in the following letter:

> Nor had Death been the Punishment Should I have been So Long before I had Come in and Thrown my Self upon her Majties Clemency, but Jayls, Pillorys and Such like with which I have been So Much Threatn'd have Convinc't me I want Passive Courage, and I Shall Never for the Future Think my Self Injur'd if I am Call'd a Coward.[147]

The fear of prison dominated much of Defoe's life and permeates the story of Moll Flanders. Moll changes her name, wears disguises, lies, and betrays companions in order to keep out of jail. When she is finally captured, she is

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[146]Minto, op. cit., pp. 140-141.

[147]Daniel Defoe, The Letters of Daniel Defoe, ed. George Harris Healey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 6.

as profoundly affected by her experiences as her creator was by his incarceration.

Thus the difference between Crusoe and Moll lies in the fact that Moll is psychologically affected enough by her prison isolation to change her way of living by giving up her stealing, and Crusoe is not that affected by his island experience. Both do become more religious when they are in trouble, but this is an intensification of a belief inherent in them rather than something new.

The primary emotion which determines the courses of action taken by Defoe's characters is fear--of poverty, of discovery, and of moral degradation. The main fear of Moll Flanders is poverty because it signifies not only a lack of food and shelter but also a complete loss of the middle-class status that she strives very hard to attain. Each time she takes a lover or steals an item, she does it with the idea of getting money to support herself. Only once does she go into The Mint where the lowest criminals could go to escape the law. She is horrified at the decay and poverty around, and Defoe has her say:

> I was not wicked enough for such fellows as these yet. On the contrary, I began to consider here very seriously what I had to do; how things stood with me, and what course I ought to take. I knew I had no friends, no, not one friend or relation in the world; and that little I had left apparently wasted, which when it was gone, I saw nothing but misery and starving was before me. Upon these considerations, I say, and filled with

> horror at the place I was in, and the dreadful objects which I had always before me, I resolved to be gone.[148]

Although Moll physically removes herself from The Mint, the spectre of the poverty haunts her all of her life.

Roxana commits her first sin because of poverty. She is forced to sell all of her possessions, send her children to relatives, and dismiss her servants. She is finally so desperate for money that she agrees to having a love affair with the Butcher because he is willing to provide her with an adequate living. Poverty is not a great problem for her after she becomes the widow of the rich Jeweller. Her greatest fear during her later life is that of having her true identity revealed. If it were known, she would lose her social position.

When Crusoe is on the island, he is very much afraid of an invasion or of something catching him unaware. As Maximillian E. Novak points out, even the passage of time does not help his fear:

> Although he admits that he has not seen anything on the island more dangerous than a goat, he lives in constant fear of some unknown enemy. Such a reaction might be considered normal enough during his first few days on the island, but Crusoe is still afraid a year after his arrival.[149]

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[148] Moll Flanders, p. 58.

[149] Maximillian E. Novak, "Robinson Crusoe's Fear and the Search for Natural Man," Modern Philology, LVIII (May, 1961), 241.

When he sees the single footprint during his fifteenth year on the island, he runs to his house, locks the door, and sits there all night afraid to go to sleep. It takes him almost two years to get over his shock. Benjamin Boyce comments on the two years of terror as follows:

> Crusoe for two years is a haunted man. His mind behaves strangely and so does his body, and his nights as well as his days are fearful as he struggles with himself. After "Weeks and Months" he succeeds in reviving his dead faith in God and "was no more sad, at least, not on that Occasion." Ironic reflection upon his reversed attitude toward the idea of society on his island also cannot help the neurotic much. The extra fortifications he hurries into are described, and though the description is really not clear, the sense of threat from "the Out-side of my outer Wall" hits one forcibly.... Fear of danger, Crusoe says, is "ten thousand Times more terrifying than Danger it self, when apparent to the Eyes," and this book, in its central, famous part, is loaded with fear.[150]

When Friday comes to the island, Crusoe is no longer afraid. He is not afraid of being alone, but when he is alone, he is afraid--of the unknown. Society dispels his fear.

Captain Singleton and Moll Flanders are both afraid of being caught and hanged for their crimes. The fear of being discovered for committing what today seems a minor crime was a life or death matter in the early eighteenth century because the penalty for most crimes was hanging. Any person indicted for a crime was almost certain to be convicted because it was impossible to secure an adequate

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[150]Benjamin Boyce, "The Question of Emotion in Defoe," Studies in Philology, L (January, 1953), 51.

defense in court. Beth Ann Bassein discusses the problems involved in trying to defend oneself when she states:

> All the pleadings and indictments until 1730 were in Latin....At the trial, no one who had any interest in the prisoner could be a witness.... Witnesses wrote their answers to questions, and no one knew whether they understood the questions or not. The accused conducted his own defense, but he could not give evidence. Since he rarely knew how to cross-examine witnesses against himself and seldom had witnesses of his own, his trial usually took only a short time.[151]

Both Moll and Singleton know that under the harsh laws of the time they will have no chance to escape being hanged.

The heavy penalties for wrongdoing were exacted to discourage people from becoming criminals. Defoe believed that such penalties were almost useless because most people did not go into crime unless they were forced to by "Necessity." Every person would prefer to work at an honest living if he could find a job. When the person has no training for a profession, he has considerable difficulty in finding a position. Defoe advocated more schooling for the masses and especially emphasized that women should be given the opportunity to learn a trade so that they could support themselves and not have to marry in order to keep from starving. He stated that Necessity was the cause of evil. In the Review, Saturday, September 15, 1711, he wrote:

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[151] Bassein, op. cit., p. 36.

> The world has a very unhappy notion of honesty, which they take up to the prejudice of the unhappy. Such a man is a fair merchant, a punctual dealer, an honest man, and a rich man. Ay, says one, that makes him a rich man; God blesses him because he is an honest man. It's a mistake: God's blessing is the effect of no man's merit. God's blessing may have made him a rich man--but why is he an honest man, a fair dealer, a punctual merchant? The answer is plain; Because he is a rich man. The man's circumstances are easy, his trade answers, his cash flows, and his stock increases; this man cannot be otherwise than honest, he has no occasion to be knave. Cheating in such a man ought to be felony, and that without the benefit of clergy. He has no temptation, no wretched necessity of shifting and tricking, which another man flies to, to do deliver himself from ruin. The man is not rich because he is honest, but he is honest because he is rich.[152]

If Roxana and Moll had not been facing starvation, they would not have succumbed to temptation and would have lived in the ordinary manner of a typical housewife. It is Necessity, not the desire to sin, that leads them into trouble.

Virtue is a prize to be desired, but it is possible to be virtuous only when one has security. Not until Crusoe has the basic necessities of life does he have time to study his Bible and begin to practice his religion. Moll repents only after she has a store of goods. Singleton retires from piracy when he has enough money to support himself comfortably for the rest of his life.

Moll and Roxana both try to present a virtuous

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[152]Daniel Defoe, The Best of Defoe's "Review," ed. William L. Payne (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 269.

appearance to the world. They know the value of a good reputation and pretend outrage when someone suggests that they are harlots, although they are willing to admit privately that the term is a correct one. They also make a pretense of affection for husbands and children that they do not feel because society demands that the wife and mother be a loving person. They do have a temporary liking for husbands and children when they are present, but when they are absent, they are dismissed from the thoughts of Moll and Roxana. Virginia Drew comments on Moll's concern for her children as follows:

> As for her own children, it is difficult to keep track of the number she abandons. She does take steps to have one illegitimate child adopted by a foster-mother; she is duly shocked to discover how many such children are born and how cruel their fate usually is, while the baby-farmers rake in the profits. (We remember Defoe's arguments for the building of a foundling hospital.) But Moll never concerns herself in the least for the fate of all the other children she has left. When she meets her son in Virginia, however, she is overwhelmed by a rush of maternal emotions, and we are quite ready to believe in them. Moll indeed, like her creator probably, ignores the gap between her professions and her practice.[153]

The only love found in the novel is between Moll and the younger brother of her benefactress and later between Moll and Jemmy. Even this second love is tempered by practicality.

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[153]Elizabeth Drew, The Novel: A Modern Guide to Fifteen English Masterpieces (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1963), p. 31.

Marriage is a business contract, not a love affair. Any affection that results is merely a bonus received. Roxana is the most concerned about the institution of marriage because she had been left destitute by her Fool husband. Love is for the young or for the people who have financial security. Marriage should be contracted to obtain security, not for love.

Part of the problem of marriage is that the woman tends to lose her identity as a person and becomes merely a sort of servant. Defoe was opposed to the woman being subjected to such a life and argued that she should be allowed to participate in the business world. She would then have a more important status and be more financially secure.

The problem of maintaining identity occurs in a different way in Robinson Crusoe. The main character must try to remain human in a world of non-humanity. Defoe did not believe in the concept of the Noble Savage and was determined to make Crusoe remain a true Englishman. Eric Berne discusses the method Defoe uses to have Crusoe keep his identity as follows:

> But in the midst of all this, he feels an urgent necessity to keep his identity by maintaining his orientation in time and reckoning the days as they go by, as well as ordering his times of work, hunting, sleep, and diversion. He is also careful

> to determine his position in space, as precisely as he is able, by determining his latitude and longitude.[154]

Moll keeps her identity by clinging to her false name of Moll instead of her real name Betty. She uses the name of Betty only in the days of her youth and innocence; after that she says that she uses other names, but she thinks of herself as "Moll," an unfortunate woman forced into crime.

Self-deception is a practice followed by all of the characters--as it is with all of mankind. Moll calls herself "whore" and "thief," but she is not as honest about giving the reasons for her actions. Dorothy Van Ghent points out the manner in which Moll rationalizes in this way:

> Criminal in action, Moll will have to moralize crime as a social good; and so she does. Her robbery of a child will have prevented many future crimes of this kind; her depredations upon one drunk will have preserved the happiness of many families; all the readers of Moll Flanders will have received her benefactions. Moll's moralizing thoughts are the harmonies of the cash-register world in which she lives, for the cash register, like the celestial spheres, has its harmonies too, as the buttons are punched, the mechanism throbs, and the till rolls out. But these harmonies are so divergent from the harmonies of what we know, from our own observations and from the history of ethical ideas, as the spiritually and morally sensitive life, that their meaning in the total

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[154] Eric Berne, "The Psychological Structure of Space with Some Remarks on Robinson Crusoe," Psychoanalytic Quarterly, XXV (October, 1956), 561.

> context of the book offers itself as ironic meaning: the morality that is preached by Moll is a burlesque of morality.[155]

There is a certain burlesque of morality, but it must be remembered that Moll is also trying to tell her story from two points in time--as the incident happens and as she looks back on it at the end of her life. In order to tell what a wicked life she has had, she must record the thoughts and actions as they happened, but she must also appear to be disapproving them. This is what causes much of the difficulty in deciding how much is sincerity and how much is self-deception. The ability of the Puritan to rationalize his behavior into something which is in agreement with his religious belief causes even more difficulty in trying to analyze the problem of self-deception. In the example cited, Moll does say that the parents should take better care of the child. This is ironic because Moll herself never takes care of her numerous children. But later, in looking back, Moll realizes that she has been deceiving herself and does face reality in most instances by the time of her recounting the past. To have her come completely to reality and stop deceiving herself would be to make her too perfect to be human. Defoe wisely stopped before he went that far.

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[155]Dorothy Van Ghent, The English Novel (New York: Rinehart and Company, 1953), p. 42.

II. THE NATURE OF WANDERERS

Wandering blithely from village to town, the picaresque hero went through life unconcerned about morality, worried only about being caught by the authorities sent to apprehend him for his misdemeanors. He was a rogue who had to run fast and travel alone in order to avoid imprisonment. He, however, chose to live this kind of life rather than to be the conventional servant.

There is much of the picaresque hero in Defoe's characters. Crusoe's wanderings around Africa, Brazil, and Europe during the first part of his story are in picaresque tradition. But Crusoe is too much interested in sin and morality to be a picaro. Neither does he take a hedonistic pleasure in his adventures as does the rogue.

Moll Flanders is the character most closely resembling the picaresque hero. She is an illegitimate child; she wanders from place to place; she commits crimes; and lives outside ordinary society. However, there are some important differences from the traditional rogue. Bonamy Dobrée comments on the difference in environment from the earlier picaresque tales as he says:

> Previously the picaresque novel had born little relation to <u>common</u> experience, not much more, to say the truth, than the romance, which had been

> deliberately not of the commonplace world. But here is the story of an ordinary person in the workaday world.[156]

Moll is frequently in the workaday world, but she can hardly be classed as "ordinary" although she comes from the working class.

Another critic who believes that Moll has no connection with the picaresque rogue is Ernest A. Baker, who says:

> There is nothing of the picaresque in Moll Flanders. The heroine is a rogue, but not one rejoicing in her roguories; quite the contrary. To the modern reader, her life is a serious study of the effects of heredity and environment in the making of criminals.[157]

Baker mistakes Moll's moral statements for her real attitude. She does enjoy the thrill of outwitting shopkeepers. When she goes into an alehouse, she steals the silver tankard off the next table and hides it. The waiter tells the woman at the bar that he has picked up the tankard. Moll is pleased and says:

> I heard all this, much to my satisfaction, for I found plainly that the tankard was not missed, and yet they concluded it was fetched away; so I drank my ale, called to pay, and as I went away I said, "Take care of your plate, child," meaning a silver pint mug, which he brought me to drink in.[158]

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[156] Dobrée, op. cit., p. 424.

[157] Baker, op. cit., p. 190.

[158] Moll Flanders, pp. 188-189.

In spite of Moll's later statement that she is horrified by her wicked action, she is really thrilled with her success. Her daring at telling the boy to take care of the silver makes the escapade more dangerously exciting. It is not until after Moll is convicted and sent to prison that she stops stealing. Her remarks about living in horror all of her life are not to be considered seriously. For many years she did <u>enjoy</u> sinning.

It is important also to note that Moll does not commit a great variety of sins, she commits the same ones over and over. She also does not try to change her methods except one time when she dresses in man's clothing and calls herself Gabriel Spencer. Robert Alter comments on the difference between Moll and the picaro when he says:

> A real, red-blooded picaro, in the style of Lazarillo de Tormes or Gil Blas, is a man of imagination by calling. Born in--or rather outside of--a hierarchical society where each individual is assigned a fixed place, he can envisage for himself the possibility of assuming multiple roles.... Moll Flanders, however, insists on living in a world of cold, hard facts....The contrast between her kind of mind and that mentality which is characteristically picaresque is reflected in the different attitudes the two take toward disguise.... The picaroon, in escaping from the fixity of the social system, inevitably becomes a quick-change artist....In slipping off one costume and putting on another, he affirms his protean nature, he achieves a sense of the broad range of possibilities of what he, the picaroon, can be.
>
> Moll Flanders, on the other hand, remains wholly Moll Flanders even when the exigencies of her career in thieving lead her to go out in disguise. Putting

> on different clothes does not mean for her putting on a new identity, or even playing a new role.[159]

The differences between Moll and the usual picaresque hero are that the rogue is usually a man, that he does not make moral statements, that he does not repent, that he does not return to a place a second time, and that he does not fall in love. The picaro has brief encounters with ladies but does not linger long enough to establish a permanent relationship. In his discussion of the picaresque hero Frank Wadleigh Chandler says:

> But the sharpest contrast between Defoe and previous picaresque writers lies in his treatment of love. The Spanish and French anti-heroines seem never to have known unarmed innocence or natural affection. Moll Flanders experiences all the hopes and fears of a blind devotion. Her first affair with the elder son of her benefactress is alone sufficient to distinguish Defoe from every writer in the picaresque field before him.[160]

Roxana goes from one lover to another as a picaro goes from one master to another. She does not really enjoy her adventures and she occasionally is forced to flee from one place to another, but her social position keeps her from associating with the usual companions of rogues.

Captain Singleton's adventures are picaresque to the

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[159] Alter, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

[160] Frank Wadleigh Chandler, The Literature of Roguery (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1907), II, 292.

extent that he wanders around and steals from people, but the playfulness and hedonistic attitude of the rogue are completely missing in this story.

The picaro is often an outcast of society. None of Defoe's characters are rejected by other people. They are hunted by the police for breaking laws, but they always find friends to help them escape. Even the victims of their crimes are pleasant to them. Their willingness to talk to the characters is often what leads to their downfall. The type of wanderer who is condemned by society and forced to wander the earth with no friends to help him does not appear in these novels.

The characters do not have to be forced into wandering--they can hardly wait to take the next ship somewhere. Captain Singleton sails all around the Indian Ocean and into the South Pacific. He also walks across Africa and in the course of his journey discovers the source of the Nile (not yet discovered in reality). Defoe has his character go through the unexplored territories and keeps him away from the known settlements. Gary Scrimgeour comments on Defoe's use of geography when he says:

> When getting his adventurers into Africa, he ignores the existence of the European settlements on the east coast, then meticulously steers them away from all interior areas (such as the Zambesi Valley, Angola, and the Congo) familiar to the geographers, and finally refuses to tell the

story of their passage through the west coast settlements.[161]

Defoe did not know what the real colonies were like and did not want to be inaccurate if he could help it. However, he was willing to speculate about unexplored areas and to apply his wide knowledge of geography in a manner which has later been proved to be surprisingly accurate considering the reports he had to work with. Defoe makes Singleton to be interested in describing the geography and the animals of the region wherever he goes. He is careful not to be very specific.

Moll has little opportunity to travel outside the country, but she does a little traveling in America. She selects Carolina as the best colony to live in because it has a warmer climate than any other colony founded at that time (1719). There is, however, less description of America in Moll Flanders than there is of Africa in Captain Singleton in spite of the fact that there was a considerable amount of writing available to Defoe to read about the land.

The one character with a love for travel is Crusoe. That is why his imprisonment on the island is so especially cruel for him. He prefers traveling by water to lands

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[161] Gary Scrimgeour, "The Problem of Realism in Defoe's Captain Singleton," Huntington Library Quarterly, XXVII (November, 1963), 23.

which border on the sea. A land journey to him is merely a means to get to another seacoast. He is not interested in stopping to look at things on the way. Crusoe's determination to travel instead of settling down in England led to his "original sin" of disobeying his father. John Laird discusses Crusoe's foolishness in wanting to go to sea when he says:

> Crusoe's "original sin", he said, was disobedience to his father, but the sin was more than a simple breach of the fifth commandment. The aggravating circumstance, and, it would seem, the worst part of the sin, was that Crusoe's father, né Kreutzmann of Bremen, was a wise man whose paternal injunctions were justified because his philosophy of life was sound. His was a "just standard of true felicity", for he knew that the middle station of life, or rather, the "upper station of low life", was the best. Since his son Robinson had a comfortable berth waiting for him, his hare-brained fancies for the sea, for adventure, for seeing the world were preposterous follies.[162]

Crusoe does not admit that he just wants to wander; he hints that he wants to make money. Maximillian E. Novak points out that this is not his real reason when he states:

> The dreams of riches from sea adventures had faded with Raleigh in the Tower. Thus any suggestion that Crusoe's main interest was to improve his condition in life seems to confuse the restlessness of the capitalist with the restlessness of the wanderer.[163]

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[162] John Laird, Philosophical Incursions into English Literature (New York: Russell and Russell, 1962), pp. 22-23.

[163] Maximillian E. Novak, "Robinson Crusoe's 'Original Sin'," Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, I (Summer, 1961), 22.

Crusoe never gets over his love of travel and continues to travel after he is rescued from the island.

The wanderer is usually a person who likes to be alone. He moves in and out of society as he chooses. There are no characters in Defoe's novels who sit around crying about their lack of companionship when they occasionally find themselves alone. Neither do they rejoice about finally getting some privacy. They merely accept their solitude and concentrate on the daily business to be done. When they have a chance to get back into the social world, they do so immediately. Crusoe is glad to be rescued from his island. He leaves right away and not until he gets back to England for a visit does he return to the island to see how his colony has prospered. Defoe's characters do not really mind being alone, but they find it more pleasant to be wandering around among people than to be isolated from them.

III. THE LIFE PATTERN

"Ye must be born again" is the command which determines the direction of the life pattern in Defoe's novels. The string of episodes of the picaresque novel becomes for Defoe a series of episodes which take the character back to where he started--with the difference being that the second time he either finds or has already

found religion. Crusoe starts from his home in England and returns to his home; he also feels compelled to return to his island.

Captain Singleton goes back to England at the end of his career. When he was young, he did not know his name and wandered around the country. As an old man he is in disguise as a Greek in order to hide his identity as he goes around England. He, like Crusoe, must also return to his island; his trouble begins with the mutiny at Madagascar and ends years later when he and William leave the pirate ship at Madagascar.

Roxana returns to Holland, but because of the strange ending of the book, it is difficult to determine just what Defoe may have had in mind for a real ending.

Moll Flanders contains the best illustration of the cycle. Moll is born at Newgate and goes into a life of crime; she is spiritually reborn at Newgate and goes out to live a life of middle-class decency. It is also at Newgate that she is re-united with Jemmy, her only legal husband.

By the ends of their lives all of the main characters have achieved not only a religious conversion but also financial and social success. Crusoe marries well and is able to see that his family is financially secure. Moll is happily married to a "gentleman," and

they have enough money to make a new start in life.

Each of the heroes has then achieved the goals for which he has been struggling. Each has religion, money, and middle-class social position. The only difficulty left is that Roxana is still pursued by her daughter--a problem left unsolved by Defoe. Each one has achieved his goal through a long personal struggle against poverty and degradation, and if he is careful not to reveal his past, he can finally take his place in the middle-class social world--and be no longer alone.

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